

Market report

Pat Rogers

ROBIN MYERS and MICHAEL HARRIS (Editors)

Sale and Distribution of Books from 1700
164pp. Oxford Polytechnic Press.
£5.50.
0 902692 27 5

The history of the book trade is a reflexive genre. Its findings are mediated to the public along channels available to students of a minority interest. So the useful new "Publishing Pathways" series owes its existence to the staff and students of a course for the Diploma in Publishing at Oxford Polytechnic. The titles which have emerged reflect credit on the sponsors, not least in the standards of presentation. For those who have no special hang-up concerning the reproduction of an unjustified typescript, *Sale and Distribution* has a pleasantly uncluttered look: a map, an original title-page, a graph and a manuscript letter are all legibly incorporated. Something has gone wrong with a note on an early page, and the abbreviation "of" turns up as "of". But such accidents occur in the best regulated printing-houses.

Easy to see why there are few commercial outlets for a volume of this kind. The five essays, originally delivered at a conference in 1981, are termed by their authors "papers", and that's what they are. They take subjects replete with dense subject-matter: they go patiently through the sources, like court-room exhibits; they fly from trendy formulas and fashionable short-cuts. What they supply instead is a careful account of some well-defined theme; if they are usually stronger in narrative and documentation than in analysis, that may be bibliographically just what the age demands.

Contributions by the editors frame the collection. Michael Harris leads off with a strong item on galleys literature. His perspective is an unusual one: Old Bailey proceedings and Tyburn tales studied from the point of view of their dissemination and commercial fortunes. As with the other studies, we find a number of familiar names cropping up. John Applebee, of *Weekly Journal* fame; Edmund Curll; major eighteenth-century publishers such as Roberts and Cooper. But the information has never been brought together before, in this form, and Harris leaves the general picture much clearer. Social historians who accept the thesis of

Peter Linebaugh on the use of Tyburn pageantry in *terrorem* should study the mechanics of the operation.

Ian Maxted provides a detailed and one might say street-wise account of the impact of the printed word in Devon. The material relates more to Exeter than anywhere else, and again it centres on the eighteenth century, though the centuries preceding and following do receive some attention. Despite some odd paragraphing habits, Maxted offers a highly readable survey: this does not quite bear out W. G. Hoskins's pessimistic view that "somewhere between 1860 and now, Exeter ceased to be a cultured city", but is balanced. Appraisal of loss and gain deserves scrutiny. There is some especially valuable information on ephemera and popular literature. Two worthies scooped up from the limbo of time are the hawkers Dame Bedford ("a very sottish and profane person", who was swiftly made redundant) and Lobb of Sherborne. Can this latter have been related to the Bath bookseller Samuel Lobb, who may be connected by further surmise with the Leake family and Samuel Richardson?

Gwyn Walters discusses early sales catalogues: he stretches their undoubted importance as a bibliographic tool to its limits, and

asserts with more confidence than some could muster that Defoe research has been much impeded by neglect of the sale catalogue of his books. It is hard to be sure: the catalogue contains books owned by someone quite different, while the collection may well have been assembled chiefly in the later and relatively genteel phase of Defoe's life. Further, proof of ownership is never proof of close acquaintance. Still, this is another instructive piece, as is the concluding essay by Robin Myers on sales by auction. Here the leading figures are Christopher Cock in the Georgian era and George Robins in the early Victorian period. There is an amusing insight into the Strawberry Hill sale of 1842, which seems to have served as a bibliophile's Eglintoun Tournament. Cock had been satirized in drama by Fielding: we are told that "Hen appears among the male *dramatis personae*, but was played by Mrs. Clarke." It wasn't quite so odd, at that, for the part was taken by Charlotte Charke, a notable performer in breeches on and off the stage. Lady Mary's husband Edward Wortley Montagu is also given a knighthood posthumously.

There remains the most genuinely innovative item, in which Giles Barber analyses the import and export

of books in the eighteenth century. His raw data come from what looks a fairly obvious location, what everyone has missed up till now: the Customs file in the Public Record Office. Barber is able to chart the broad patterns of activity with fair precision, and to relate the trade cycles to external events. One interesting fact which emerges is that the "Western" (transatlantic) export market was not much hit by the Seven Years War, though one might have supposed that some theatres of the conflict lay uncomfortably close to the routes of passage. It is an admirable piece of detailed inquiry, which leaves abundant scope for future research. All this goes to show that, little as the modern publishing industry may suspect the fact, earlier history is a good hands.

English Poetry 1660-1880 by Donald C. Mell Jr (501 pp. Gale. 0 8103 1230 1) contains a general bibliography, covering reference materials, background resources and literary studies; and bibliographies of thirty-one individual authors, including Blake, Butler, Chatterton, Collins, Cowper, Crabbe, Dryden, Gt. Goldsmith, Gray, Johnson, Keats, Pope, Prior, Rochester, Shenton, Smart, Swift, Thomson and Young.

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WILLIAM COWPER

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BILL HUTCHINGS

The Poetry of William Cowper
246pp. Croom Helm. £12.95.
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One of the things that got the Romantic Movement moving was the dissolution of the preceding generations. Few major writers survived the middle age of sensibility: the new voices of the third quarter of the eighteenth century were hushed all too soon. Collins and Churchill, Smart and Chatterton, Sterne and Smollett - each went to his early grave. In the 1770s Hume, Gray, Goldsmith and Garrick followed them, outlived by the last representative of an older order, Samuel Johnson. Then in the 1790s a fearsome necrology: Reynolds, Robertson, Gilbert White, Gibbon, Boswell, Burke and Horace Walpole. Not a single literary figure of importance in England who had been established by 1775 was left in the year of the *Lyrical Ballads*. William Cowper is not truly an exception for he came to prominence with the Olney Hymns in 1779, and consolidated his reputation in the next decade. That he dragged on his existence in Norfolk until April 1800 appears a kind of freakish accident: even the Ossianic bard Macpherson had gone by 1796. In his terror of damnation, Cowper clung on with animal obstinacy to a frail life, and refused to vacate the stage on cue.

"The consideration of my short continuance here," he wrote to John Newton in 1790, "which was once grateful to me, now fills me with regret. I would live and live always."

But there was nothing new in isolation for Cowper. Since his breakdown at the age of thirty-one, he had felt himself a spiritual outcast. This is a process charted in the narrative Cowper wrote to describe his own conversion and the example of holy dying provided by his brother: an account known as "Adelphi", which James King and Charles Ryskamp have edited afresh in the first volume of *The Letters*. The new text derives from Judith Madan, the poet's widow, and it brings out more of the suicidal and phantasmagoric in his imagination. Unsurprisingly, it is an idiom of spiritual autobiography at large: "the language of my mutinous and disobedient heart", "the place of my second nativity" (Huntingdon, where he had retreated after his spell in the Collegium Insanorum), "the sense of sin and the expectation of punishment".

When he moves to Olney in 1767, Cowper became increasingly influenced by John Newton. Much of the first two volumes of letters is dominated by the personality of Newton. After his departure for St Mary Woolnoth in 1780 ("the Vicarage became a Melancholy Object, as soon as Mr Newton had left it", wrote Cowper glumly), the correspondence seems moulded as much by the absent one as the present in Olney. "How naturally does affliction make us Christian!" the poet had once reflected, and the subsequent years were to confirm this identification of personal disaster with spiritual awakening. It is possible to reverse the order of those terms, so that one looks for private grief as a validation of the workings of the Almighty; and this, in effect, with his ironical Calvinism, Newton did.

These days it is unfashionable to deplore the effect of evangelicalism on Cowper's poetry. But when Cowper tells Lady Hesketh, on the resumption of their intimacy in 1785, "My dear Cousin, Dejection of Spirit, which I suppose may have prevented many a man from becoming an Author, made me one," he provides evidence to support the charge as much as to

oppose it. There is a narrowness of focus in the letters to Newton which helped to set Cowper's mental course, much more than the livelier exchanges he could permit himself with Lady Hesketh and his friend Joseph Hill. The identity of the correspondents matters, too, in a way that is never true for Horace Walpole. He can select suitable recipients for each message, and when Horace Mann dies there is a short list of possible successors ready to hand. Beside this, there is a whole underworld of minor correspondences sprouting on the margin of the main cultivated clumps, where Montagu and Lady Ossory and Mme du Delfand are to be found. By contrast, Cowper has almost no casual correspondence, or none preserved. The narrow range is partly self-imposed: he is rather good at the discouraging reply to an unwanted epistle. It took someone very thick-skinned, like the uncrushable attorney-poet of Hay-on-Wye, Walter Churchey, to persist.

Yet the narrowness is also the narrowness of Olney, a restriction so palpable that Cowper could regard his move two miles down the road to Weston as a great liberation. Like a good Calvinist, he always had an eye out for these epochal moments: "The stile of dispensation peculiar to myself has hitherto been that of sudden, violent, unlook'd for change. When I have thought myself falling into the abyss I have been caught up again; when I have thought myself on the threshold of a happy eternity, I have been thrust down to Hell." The move coincided with the death of Mrs Unwin's son William: with it, as the third volume of letters opens, came a growing intimacy with the Catholic gentry of Weston, Mr and Mrs Throckmorton. Newton's suspicions were predictably aroused: coming on top of a jealous tiff with Unwin over editorial help on *The Task*, this set up a distance between Cowper and Newton which was never fully bridged.

The sense of distance, a gap, an abyss, is seldom absent for long. Cowper's original reputation had involved something more like flight from than escape to anywhere. Self-preservation entailed a willed retreat from the stream of history. This tactical withdrawal may be illustrated from two major concerns. First, literature: he speaks of himself in 1789 as one "to whom every thing that has pass'd in the literary world within these five and twenty years, is news". It took the appearance of Johnson's *Lives* to bring to Cowper's notice one man, "a poet of no great fame, of whom I did not know that he existed 'till I found him there

... He was hardly in his senses. His name was Collins." Turning insularity into a virtue, he told Hill that he never touched English poetry, "being pretty much addicted to the writing of it, and knowing that much intercourse with those gentlemen, betrays us unavoidably into a habit of imitation." Coming on Robert Burns in 1787, he responds warmly enough, although wishing the poet to "divest himself of barbarism", apparent both in "his measure and his language". It is a case, he writes to Lady Hesketh (in a passage not available in the previous standard edition of the letters, by Thomas Wright), of a nightingale acquiring the scream of a jay - "a man may whistle well, but if his breath be offensive one would not wish to sit within wind of him." Most astonishing is the fact that Cowper has to borrow a copy of *The Odyssey* in order to translate it: he owned scarcely anything except for a Horace. Oddly, it was this benighted provincial who was employed by the *Analytical Review* to supply notices of *The Botanic Garden*, Joel Barlow's *Vision of Columbus*, and a work on Friesian ornithology.

He did, it is true, read books lent by friends, although it took quite a lot of persuasion to get him to start on the Abbé Raynal. What he simply wouldn't do, increasingly, was take much intelligent interest in the world around him. "I find the Politics of times past far more intelligible than those of the present", he tells Newton on one occasion. Having regarded the American War at first with blithe confidence (there is no reference at all to the Declaration of Independence), he finds the news from Yorktown disconcerting, but chiefly because it means discarding two flag-waving poems "that I was rather proud of". He makes a vague reference to Fox's East India Bill and to the Peace of Versailles in 1763, without much sense of engagement. There is no allusion to the events in France of 1789, and just an oblique mention of the flight to Versailles. As for *The Rights of Man*, "I have not seen Payne's book, but refused to see it when it was offered to me. No man shall convince me that I am improperly govern'd while I feel the contrary." (So, years before, he had declined to read *The Clerical Marriage* - it would be bound to give "more Pain than Pleasure", knowing George Colman as he did.) He will avert his eyes and no one shall save him. There is scarcely a line about Burke or Wilkes; nothing about the spectacular events surrounding his school-friend Warren Hastings and Elijah Impey; a mere blanket dismissal

of the work of that other Westminster product, Edward Gibbon. The Handel celebrations of 1784 are swept aside ("a fiddle would have made a figure in Episcopal hands").

About the only interest in contemporary ideas which manifests itself is a kindly reference to physiognomy as "improved into a Science" by the ingenious Mr Lavater - although one might add a useful welcome to "the Secret of Animal Magnetism": Cowper was doubtful whether Mesmer's therapies could aid his depression, but unwilling to pooch the method. As for himself, he put more faith in various cathartics, emetics and diuretics. Like others afflicted by the school of sensibility, he seems to have felt that keeping one's pores and one's bowels open lay at the heart of creativity. He speaks of being "delivered of the Emetic and the verses in the same moment", and this is more than a chance connection. His opinion (outmoded by a generation or so) that "a very robust athletic habit seems inconsistent with much sensibility" suggests not quite valetudinarianism, but a vague notion that all those disabilities (weak eyes, lumbago, canker of the tongue) are somehow disordered ebullitions of a trapped soul. Creativity, says Wolfgang Iltis, is determined in a case like Mozart's by "a constitutional anomaly.... Great minds.... have always preferred to have sickly, delicate, unassuming bodies, so that they might confront their physical weakness and overcome it again and again." (It is a poignant thought that this edition of the letters has now reached December 1791: Cowper had most likely never heard of Mozart, and thought anyway that "Music in season and out of season.... destroys the spiritual discernment".) For Cowper the creative is not like a pain: it derives from pain and assuages this only for the time that the process of composition lasts.

Instead, then, of vigorous engagement with the larger life of the time, what do we have? A battle with Cowper's own past, and an unrelenting struggle with the burden of poetic history in the shape of Pope, whose negative influence makes Cowper anxious and yet fertile. Vivid evocations of simple life in the provinces: occasional spurts into fantasy and allegory - ballooning stuck Cowper forcibly, as it did Johnson and Walpole, and he dreams of a time "when these airy excursions will be universal, when Judges will fly the Circuit, and Bishops' their Visitations, and when the Tour of

Europe will be perform'd with much greater speed and with equal advantage by all who travel merely for the sake of having it to say, that they have made it". There is a certain amount about the mechanics of translating Homer: a good deal more on the subject of mounting the Homer subscription, where Cowper shows a distinct nose for business and writes tart little instructions to his publisher Joseph Johnson. There are the famous vignettes of the world as it goes in Olney: best of all here, the description of a visit by the parliamentary candidate, William Wyndham Grenville, in March 1784, which affords Cowper space for useful observation ("Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather I suppose climb in at a window than be absolutely excluded").

Not many of these letters are totally new. However, the three volumes which have so far appeared contain, understandably, fuller and more reliable texts than Wright was able to provide in 1904. James King and Charles Ryskamp promise one further volume of letters, which will trace a somewhat dispiriting human course, and also a volume of reviews and miscellaneous writings in prose. Along with the parallel series of *Poems* from Oxford in progress, edited by Ryskamp together with John D. Baird, the edition will put to the test the long-heralded Cowper revival, to see if it can sustain momentum. A selection is due out elsewhere, and monographs are on their way to supplement the new study by Bill Hutchings. There are very few complaints one could raise against the editorial work on the *Letters*, although I wish the Cowper family tree had been taken over from Wright along with his maps. The notes are consistently helpful, and seldom stray from their high general standard of accuracy. One might just suggest that the Sheridan who would delight to meet a bigot ("to propriety of pronunciation" would not be Richard Brinsley, but his father Thomas. Cowper's reference to a change "from St Giles's to Grosvenor Square" has nothing to do with Cripple Lane or "the comparatively rural environs" of Grosvenor Square, but alludes to the social distance between St Giles in the Fields and the West End. A "partie quarrelle" is not just a "party of four" but specifies a mixed foursome (hence its occasional side-swapping overtones today). And to gloss *Monumentum aere perennius* with the reference "Horace, Odes, I, iii.30" suggests an ear not very attentive to the sound and shape of the poetry - try III, xxx.1, rather.

Bill Hutchings has written a good, straightforward account of Cowper the poet. He plays down the confessional element, stresses the separation of man and writer, and tends to see "formal invocation rather than personal agony" in the address to God in some of the hymns. Characteristic phrases run along the lines, "the effects are carefully wrought", and a good deal is made of "control" - maybe too much, for some tastes. Disappointingly, "John Gilpin" is left aside, but other favourite poems are convincingly discussed, including "On the Receipt of My Mother's Picture" (which, by the way, is bafflingly absent from the notes in King and Ryskamp, though the text describes the picture's arrival). Hutchings rightly points to the influence of Prior and Churchill, among others, on Cowper's style: he insists that *The Task* is "a profoundly intelligent work, the production of a fine literary imagination operating within a frankness which is deliberately disarming in its apparent naivety". All in all this is a judicious appraisal of the poetry, especially those parts of the oeuvre which fit the slightly Augustanized touchstone - "the merits of controlled and purposeful conversation". The best thing about Hutchings is his determination not to undersell his subject. As a general introduction to Cowper, it easily outdistances the indifferent competition: Belphe first, and the rest nowhere. Let us hope that other works will follow in a more specialized vein, now that so much more of Cowper's writing is becoming available in good editions.

Land Love

We stood here in the coupledom of us.
I showed her this - a pool with leaping trout,
Split-second saints drawn in a rippled nimbus.

We heard the night-boys in the fir trees shout.
Dusk was an insect-hovered still water,
The calling of lost children, stars coming out.

With all the feelings of a widower
Who does not live there now, I dream my place.
I go by the soft paths, alone with her.

Dusk is a listening, a whispered grace
Voiced on a bank, a time that is all ears
For the snapped twig, the strange wind on your face.

She waits at the door of the hemisphere
In her harvest dress, in the remote
Local August that is everywhere and here.

What rustles in the leaves, if it is not
What I asked for, an opening of doors
To a half-heard religious anecdote?

Monogamous swans on the darkened interior
Picture the private graces of man and wife
In its white poise, its sleepy portraiture.

Night is its Dog Star, its eyelet of grief
A high, lit echo of the stony sheaves.
A puff of hedge-dust looms in the leaves.
Such love that lingers on the fields of life!

Douglas Dunn

A hide-out in the forest

S. S. Praver

ARNO SCHMIDT

Scenes from the Life of a Faun: A Short Novel

Translated by John E. Woods

159pp. Marion Boyars. £7.95.

0 7145 2762 9

When Arno Schmidt died, on Whit-Sunday 1979, modern German prose lost its greatest virtuoso. But the many delightful language-games he played in his later novels never became an end in themselves. They were always firmly kept in the service of expression — the expression of a quirky personality reviewing, from self-chosen provincial seclusion, the antics of politicians, civil servants, farmers or television actors, while also communing with nature, drawing on memories of earlier experiences and activities, and living a rich inner life in the company of books, maps and a few friends. In each of these novels there is a central consciousness which directs and guides the reader's attention. These narrator-figures all have a family resemblance; their opinions and prejudices are very close to those which Schmidt expressed more directly in his radio-essays, just as the regions and landscapes through which they move are usually those which we know Schmidt to have inhabited at various periods of his life. There is enough deliberate divergence, however, between real self and invented persona to allow the author to play enjoyable games of hide-and-seek; games which include mentioning "Arno Schmidt", either directly or by means of an acrostic, much as Hitchcock "signed" his films by making a brief appearance in his own poorly person.

The central consciousness of *Scenes from the Life of a Faun* — an early novel which first appeared in 1953 — is one Heinrich Düring, a head clerk in a provincial government office just before, and during, the Second World War. Though he likes some of his office colleagues, he despises most of them, along with their clients and most of the people he encounters at home. Even his own wife and children are seen, not without reason, through very jaundiced eyes. In his early fifties, he is drawn to a solidly built young woman in her teens whom he first encounters when she is still at school, and with whom he has a passionate sexual relationship. When the hated *Landar*, who is his department chief and with whom he plays some wonderful power games while acting the German obedient and subservient (fledgling employee, selects him to make a historical and topographical survey of the rural district he administers, Düring discovers, in some rural archives, documents relating to a French deserter during the Napoleonic Wars. With the help of these documents he finds that deserter's forest hide-out, which he adopts as his own and where he becomes, in his own mind, the "faun" of the title. Such hide-outs in the forest are illegal, however. Tracked down and in imminent danger of discovery, Düring decides to set fire to his wooden refuge. Before he can carry out his intention, however, the French deserter's butler arrives and, after a moment's hesitation, he and his young beloved when an aimless set of tremendous explosions in the local munitions factory and its underground stores. After witnessing scenes of terrible carnage, the ill-matched lovers reach the forest hut, spend a passionate night together after tending their — happily minor — injuries, and then, in one last symbolic action, abandon and destroy the "faun's" hide-out.

Scenes from the Life of a Faun is written in a form that Arno Schmidt has likened, in various theoretical writings, to a sphinx's album and a necklace of pearls. A flash of observation or memory, often interpreted with, or followed by, reflection forms a single "sphinx" or constitutes a single "pearl" which is immediately followed by another. The flash, or the particle around which the pearl is constructed, is often, for example, the second part of a short novel begins with the narrator's arrival

in the village of Rethem whose archives he intends to examine:

The bright village: awakening, it threw open all its shiny windows; every house crowded like a cock, and curtains flapped pastel wings to the tune. (One pair was covered with big red polka dots; pretty, against the puffed-up bright yellow).

Bushes in their scaly sea-green capes appeared, trembling and yearning, along all the paths and waved me on ever further down the road; stood as spectators at the edges of meadows; did trim gymnastics; whispered wantonly with chlorophyll tongues, or suddenly whistled loud trills; the bushes.

The maid in her violet smock tipped the waste bucket and its glittering yellow liquid, so that the black flies below her murmured. Blue-scarred cabbage and flabby onion spikes. The nimble door gave another whack; and confirmed the stillness. Good. (Stillness: good!)

Snouts of wind grubbed all through the grass, snoring a bit, like blue yearling boars panting. A dog burst out of his wooden gable on all fours and ricocheted back and forth, making his chain rattle-snake and yelping. "Mornin', Herr Veinikel" (In Rethem).

"I can go right on down now?": I can go right on down now.

In the underground archives: whitewashed walls, and mice in all

A bedroom in the city

Stephen Romer

PHILIPPE SOLLERS

Femmes
570pp. Paris: Gallimard. 90fr.
2 07 024881 X

Imagine a dark and stifling room in the heart of modern Paris, where an aging philosopher of History is sitting up in the small hours, quietly going out of his mind. He passes in review, as on a series of screens, the systems of thought and the history of systems of thought. They have failed him. All of them: illusion, dummy-life, the dialectics of boredom. His life is a catastrophe, *mais il faut tenir le coup*, if only for the sake of his wife. His wife! Demonic revelation lights up his face, and he turns to where she lies in bed — the sleeping female, damnable because she is always there. In her way she lives for him, of course. She has clothed his life with her own flesh and blood; she lives, impossibly pure in her Marxist orthodoxy. She surveys his comings and goings, vets his acquaintances, censors his mail with the vigilance of a secret police. She is the scourge of his life, the living reproach to his increasing weakness and aberration. She has drained him of his life-blood, castrated and unmanned him. O to be free of her and of the whole masquerade! So he snatches up a scarf and strangles her.

Why fictionalize any further? The tragedy of Louis Althusser, barely disguised under the name of *Femmes*, is the utter heart of the sprawling mass of words which Philippe Sollers (in his satanic way) likes to call a novel. But the tragedy of Althusser, who strangles his wife, is real. So, in their different ways, are the sordid and pitiable deaths of Barthes and Lacan (under their new names, Werth and Fals) — the other two, the trinity that Sollers chooses to link to the deaths of these latter as well. Fals and Lacan is held in thrall by a bisexual psycho-erotic dance. Werth/Barthes loses all will to live after the death of his mother, his sole great love. Given these sombre facts, there would be something hateful about the lightness of Sollers's treatment of them: mere *opérette* one might say, were it not for his outstanding intelligence. It is futile to try and guess Sollers's view of the casual journalistic cliché calling him a provocateur or an *enfant terrible*. His intelligence is manifest and, at the

the boxes: little black mannikins, did inquisitive acrobatics along the walls, leapt in arches, dwelt in Rethem labyrinths. (bring some bread crumbs along tomorrow).

Schmidt plays a multitude of variations on this simple pattern — a pattern that proves most effective for the portrayal of a world apprehended by a strongly marked personality with a powerful inner life. This technique has since become familiar through the novels of Walter Kempowski; but if one reads Kempowski after Schmidt, the former comes to seem very small beer indeed.

The world which this central consciousness apprehends is one made hideous by the Nazis. Düring is an outwardly conforming as any of his fellow-citizens; he has experienced a pogrom, he hears of concentration-camp cruelties from a party-member who has taken part in them (no "we didn't know" alibi for Arno Schmidt), but his only outwardly visible act of dissent is his refusal to join the SA or another such party-organization. His dissent and his rage are bottled up inside, where they mingle with amused contempt for all those who have been fooled by "charismatic" leaders throughout history. The hide-out in the forest and its voluntary destruction before authority has sniffed it out becomes a potent symbol, paralleling the catastrophe described in the most violent passages Arno Schmidt was ever to write: that caused by the

blowing up of vast underground munition stores, a miniature image of the catastrophe caused by the Third Reich and impossibly foreseen by the narrator.

Düring's interior voice says many harsh things about his fellow-Germans; but Schmidt leaves us in no doubt of his narrator's own essential and ineradicable Germanness. The combination of a rich inner life with an outer life dictated by conscientious *Pflichterfüllung*, loving apprehension of a rural landscape that has few dramatic attractions, but is all the more dear for that: a host of literary allusions, quotations and reminiscences — these and other features remind, and are meant to remind, Schmidt's readers of German traditions that reach from *Aufklärung* and Romanticism to Biedermeier and Poetic Realism. The German Expressionists, outlawed by the Nazis whose bards and painters Düring despises as much as he loves older German forms of pictorial and verbal art, become particularly important. The book is full of allusions to Expressionist painting, and it deliberately employs the techniques pioneered by Expressionist writers, ranging from August Stramm to the younger Döblin, as one possible means of repairing the damage the Third Reich had done to the German language and of building a bridge between post-war German literature and respectable Modernist traditions. In Schmidt's later work the place here

occupied by the Expressionists was taken by James Joyce.

Alongside the often chosen German writers who form Heinrich Düring's literary pantheon are English and American writers who again and again. They include Pound, Cooper, Poe and Sir Walter Scott. The most potent presence of all, however, is that of Jonathan Swift: his deep nausea of some of the Brobagnian scenes, seem appropriate responses to a Germany in which one's very act of greeting a neighbour or a colleague is distorted into hailing (or hating) a misdeed of his people, whose nauseating speech and presence could only be removed by a catastrophic defeat — the approach of which we sense constantly. *Scenes from the Life of a Faun* ends with Germany's final capitulation.

Reading Arno Schmidt can be addictive. I was first captivated by him in the 1960s, and know no greater reading pleasure in the whole of post-war German literature. *Scenes from the Life of a Faun* is a splendid example of his early manner and an excellent introduction to his work as a whole. Schmidt's gifted Amazon translator has once again conveyed the author's form and meaning with great success. Those who fall under the novel's spell will, I hope, join me in urging the same translator to give the other two novels which Schmidt issued together with this one in the under the title *Nobodaddy's Kids*.

(World Organization for Men Antihomophobia and for a New Natality). Dark initials then, underground conspiracies, and part of the post-modernist apparatus from Pynchon to Sollers.

The formal aims of WOMANN include, briefly, the elimination of sexist art and literature in education; the annihilation of the Judeo-Christian patriarchal tradition, especially in the form of Catholicism; the establishment of a regime controlled by women based on broadly drawn Marxist-Freudian lines. Our gallant and, it seems, highly potent narrator drifts somewhat aimlessly from continent to continent, city to city, always at the beck and call of one or other of these organization women. It is soon clear that these ladies demand their sexual rights as before, and his endless orotic adventures, described in detail and with verve, significantly enough form the only events in the novel that seem real. They give it a semblance of progression. Who exactly are these women? First there is the brilliant Deborah — in fact a rather tender portrait of Sollers's wife, Julia Kristeva. Then there is Cyd, a sensual English girl who lives in New York, works in films and specializes in fellatio; there is Flora, a Spanish revolutionary and a disciple of Fals, an electrifying Japanese girl in the tourist business and Bernadette, known as "la Presidente", the frigid lesbian leader of F.A.M. But even she is not proof against the irresistible sexual fascination exerted by S's talented friend. There is no contradiction here; the aim of all these women remains patriarchal control. They need orgasms: men are useful. They demand children: men are sperm-banks. The enormous difference being, of course, that they can now dictate when they want these things. Their capacity for refusal is as great as a man's.

All these women, in their different ways, try to keep the narrator on the straight and narrow path, as the useful convert to their cause. But as the story progresses he starts to show alarming deviations. First of all he is writing a novel to be called *Femmes*. Dark rumours circulate about the purity of his attitude towards women, he exhibits a growing fascination for Catholicism, the religion of his birth, and talks with the BVM. He is drawn in Catholicism because of its past absurdity. He has a tender regard for the Scriptures, and is quite obsessed by dogma. Especially the Assumption of Mary. (He recalls

orgasms: the Church's way of exorcising the female.) What Rome, he indulges in a subtle apothosis of de Sade — the only one who really understood Catholicism, for Joyce, Bataille and the other dilettantes themselves; in fact they are more profoundly atheistic than the above, for whom blasphemy actually meant something, just as for their much-quoted Baudelaire, our man, aesthetic Catholicism will remain one of the few civil pastimes available to men who women have taken over the "real world". They will float in a extravagant dogmas, built on a baroque excesses, and families in their heart's content about the Virgin. And so long as they perform the functions required by women, he has no reason why they should be killed this last "obscurantist" rage.

From a critic's point of view, Sollers is like walking in the woods of scorched-earth policy. He is always least two steps ahead. All these staccato phrases: the *style* *à la* Céline. And there, on the very next page, you find Sollers laughing over his shoulder and saying "I know that" — what are the alternatives? The complete absence of punctuation, *Paradis*, or this which alone can give the pace of life as I know it? Sollers, writing is becoming an ever freer medium, freed, that is, from "realities"; it is infinite — hence *Paradis*, the title which has replaced *Femmes* for the quarterly which Sollers runs. *Femmes*, it is a novel, not a contemporary interest, examined, what is important, though, is the psychology behind the book — it is this true history of modernity which gives it new significance? *Mais mon cher, vous le voulez-vous dire?*

Hepa-Maes-Jelinsk's *Witness* (191pp. Twayne's World Atlantic Series, \$17.95), a study by an authority on Harris, examines the whole corpus of the novelist's original works. It is useful as an introduction because of the clarification of the basic artistic and philosophical issues. Professor Jelinsk's complete immersion in Harris's rich and paradoxical work, her insight into the networks of themes and metaphors make this volume invaluable for a more advanced reader. This is the best critical book on the subject.

Henry Pachter's last book, *Henry Pachter*, is a no very systematic way, but the essays that comprise it — studies, for the most part, of Weimar personalities and intellectual tendencies — do illuminate the often repeated statement that the republic died of a death of convinced republicans. In the long autobiographical fragment that serves as a prelude to the volume, Pachter makes it clear that his own republican

HENRY PACTHER

Wolmar Etudes

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In 1981, shortly after Henry Pachter's death, Martin Jay wrote a memorial note for *Salmagundi* in which he recalled a conference on the culture of the Weimar Republic that had taken place at the New School for Social Research ten years before. The general tone of this gathering of notable exiles was, he wrote, celebratory and even complacent, and Pachter became annoyed at "what he perceived as the puffery of the proceedings". When it was his turn to speak, he chose to make fun of Karl Mannheim's comparison of Weimar and Periclean Athens, saying, among other things: "Perhaps the Weimar Republic was not a Periclean Age at all, but the age of Marlene Dietrich. We were no great innovators; we were imitators on a small scale. We did not generate the great idea that might have led us out of the impasse of our social, economic and political plight. Far from 'freely floating', we were being floated and coaxed and pushed. We were a generation of first-rate mediocrities; never have there been so many brilliant failures, so many excellent second-raters..."

This dash of cold water upon a gathering that was verging on pretentiousness was characteristic of Pachter's style in intellectual discourse. He was always a forthright critic of loose generalization, skewed perspective and failure to see the relationship between idea and reality, and he was ever mindful of the

distorting power of nostalgia. A German refugee himself, he could on occasion insist that the Weimar Republic was one of the freest states that ever existed, "the most open and lively of all the systems I have ever known", but he was made uncomfortable by the contemporary tendency to exaggerate its cultural achievements while ignoring the murderous internecine tensions that lay beneath the glamorous surface. What should be remembered, he said in his lecture in 1971, was that "if Weimar was Periclean, then it was so in the sense that the original Periclean Age too was a time of mortal crisis".

Henry Pachter's last book, *Henry Pachter*, is a no very systematic way, but the essays that comprise it — studies, for the most part, of Weimar personalities and intellectual tendencies — do illuminate the often repeated statement that the republic died of a death of convinced republicans. In the long autobiographical fragment that serves as a prelude to the volume, Pachter makes it clear that his own republican

sympathies were slow in developing. Although he did some work for the Democratic Party as early as 1920, when he was thirteen, this attachment was soon undermined by his simultaneous membership in the Jugendbewegung, which turned his thoughts, like those of many of his contemporaries, from the mundane tasks upon which democracy depended to more grandiose political ideas about a total reform of the ways in which Germans lived and the creation of a true *Gemeinschaft*, a united community, that would be freed from the burden of history and the restrictions imposed by tradition and purged of materialism and the worldly cynicism of old-fashioned politics.

Pachter was later to recognize this as an exaggerated form of romantic utopianism and his generation's fascination with Nietzsche, as a foreshadowing of that flight from logic that facilitated Hitler's rise to power. (In two essays in this book, "Irrationalism and the Paralysis of Reason" and "Aggression as Cultural Rebellion", he comes close to making Nietzsche the real villain of Germany's tragedy, accusing him of having, among other things, encouraged the German rejection of the Enlightenment and its political doctrines.) In the 1920s, the youth movement tended to make its members reject the ideals and the methods of the Weimar Coalition and, if they engaged in politics at all, to encourage them to turn to the radical parties of the left and the right. "The Republic never won our love; it was a framework, a vacuum, ready to be filled by any force that was led by bold men."

Pachter himself, at the age of eighteen, joined the Communist Youth, in the belief that the creation of a new democratic society would be effected "through a great act of purgation, an apocalyptic leap which would carry us from the realm of servitude and necessity into the realm of freedom and cooperation", and that this would be accomplished by the spontaneous action of the oppressed with the guidance of the party. Unfortunately, his affiliation with the KPD coincided with the ascendancy of Rüdiger Fischer and Arkadij Maslow, who had nothing but contempt for his kind of idealism, and since he had also fallen under the influence of Karl Korsch, a brilliant and uncompromisingly unorthodox Marxist teacher, whose doctrines, Pachter says, were as unpalatable to the party leadership as a Christology by Kazantzakis would be to the Baptist Church, he was eventually expelled.

"When one is a political animal", he writes, "it is difficult to endure sectarian isolation." He tried to escape from it, first, by seeking to persuade

Korsch to found a new party and then, when that failed, by joining various splinter groups, like the Libertarian Socialists and the Socialist Workers Party, meanwhile teaching his own brand of socialism in adult schools and workers' gatherings in the Neu-Kölln section of Berlin. But the increasing polarization of politics convinced him that the dissident groupings on the left lacked the resources, organization and working-class support that were necessary in a time of crisis and, with great reluctance, he decided in the end to join the Social Democratic Party.

In doing so, it was his hope, as it was that of other young socialists like Carlo Mierendorff and Julius Leber, and Kurt Schumacher, to re-awaken the combative spirit of the SPD and to humanize its goals and, by doing so, to make it the rallying point for the defence of the Republic. But this was quickly proven to be impossible because, as Pachter writes, "on the one hand, their attempts to lure a desperate *Mittelstand* into the party could not compete with the dogmatism of the fascists, who better understood the hatred those social strata felt for the Republic and for all the progressive values associated with it. On the other hand, this group's militancy as well as the coherence of its innovative program put the youngsters at odds with a party leadership that had grown old and rigid." Party meetings were always filled with elderly citizens who were more interested in drinking beer and playing skat than they were in speeches that deviated from the editorials in *Vorwärts*. The party's structure militated against an energetic and a vacuum, ready to be filled by any force that was led by bold men."

Death of a republic

Gordon A. Craig

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Pachter was later to recognize this as an exaggerated form of romantic utopianism and his generation's fascination with Nietzsche, as a foreshadowing of that flight from logic that facilitated Hitler's rise to power. (In two essays in this book, "Irrationalism and the Paralysis of Reason" and "Aggression as Cultural Rebellion", he comes close to making Nietzsche the real villain of Germany's tragedy, accusing him of having, among other things, encouraged the German rejection of the Enlightenment and its political doctrines.) In the 1920s, the youth movement tended to make its members reject the ideals and the methods of the Weimar Coalition and, if they engaged in politics at all, to encourage them to turn to the radical parties of the left and the right. "The Republic never won our love; it was a framework, a vacuum, ready to be filled by any force that was led by bold men."

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the desire nor the strength to effect a far-reaching revolution and that if, as Pachter writes, "the withering away of the *Räte* meant that democracy of his life work, which, with its exaltation of sacrifice and fascination with death, was basically anti-humanist and proto-fascist. The essay on Meinecke, subtitled "The Tragedy of German Liberalism", describes the historian's life-long attempt to reconcile the actions of the national state and the ideals of German humanism and the way in which it eventuated in a philosophy of history (*Historismus*) which held that whatever "springs from the innermost essence of a natural being cannot be immoral". This helped Pachter argue, to legitimize other forces that, since Bismarck's time, had been emasculating liberalism's traditional anti-authoritarian stance, for, in the last analysis, "Historismus" always sanctions the result of the power struggle". When the victory and subsequent behaviour of the National Socialists revealed with brutal clarity what the consequences of this attitude were, Meinecke, in his last works, evaded any comment upon the responsibility for this, preferring, like many of his countrymen and in language not unlike Heidegger's, to take refuge in ruminations about the play of destiny and chance in history.

After Hitler came to power, Pachter and his fiancée collaborated with Richard Löwenthal in putting out the first underground resistance paper, *Proletarische Aktion*, but by the end of 1933 it was clear that the new regime was not ephemeral and that local resistance would not only be increasingly dangerous but largely ineffective. He therefore went into exile, first to France, and then in 1940, by way of Spain and Portugal, to the United States, where he had a distinguished career as teacher in the City College of New York and the New School for Social Research and as a regular contributor to *Dissent* and *Salmagundi* as well as to several European newspapers, and where, in all of his activities, he remained true to the principles of humanistic socialism that had inspired him since his youth. The last chapter of *Weimar Studies* is a charming essay on being an exile, in which Pachter has many good things to say about getting to know the United States ("I always tell European visitors that they should not be misled by the white skin and English or near-English language of the Americans they meet, that they will not understand American until they pretend that all the people here have green hair and are playing a game the rules of which the observer is supposed to guess") as well as some shrewd comments upon the fundamental differences between the American and European cultures that contribute to the present difficulties in the Western alliance.

As for the academic intellectuals, the great majority were conservative, reactionary and even Nazi-oriented, whereas the minority who rallied to the Republic were right-wing liberals who did not for the most part engage in party politics. In two of the most substantial essays in this volume, Pachter examines the attitudes of these groups by focusing upon the work of two representative figures, the philosopher Martin Heidegger and the dean of Weimar historians, Friedrich Meinecke. In the former case, he argues that Heidegger's brief association with National Socialism, which began with the famous rectoral

address at the University of Freiburg in 1933, an oration that Pachter dismisses as "glibberish", was perhaps of less importance than the inherent tendency of his life work, which, with its exaltation of sacrifice and fascination with death, was basically anti-humanist and proto-fascist. The essay on Meinecke, subtitled "The Tragedy of German Liberalism", describes the historian's life-long attempt to reconcile the actions of the national state and the ideals of German humanism and the way in which it eventuated in a philosophy of history (*Historismus*) which held that whatever "springs from the innermost essence of a natural being cannot be immoral". This helped Pachter argue, to legitimize other forces that, since Bismarck's time, had been emasculating liberalism's traditional anti-authoritarian stance, for, in the last analysis, "Historismus" always sanctions the result of the power struggle". When the victory and subsequent behaviour of the National Socialists revealed with brutal clarity what the consequences of this attitude were, Meinecke, in his last works, evaded any comment upon the responsibility for this, preferring, like many of his countrymen and in language not unlike Heidegger's, to take refuge in ruminations about the play of destiny and chance in history.

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Looking on the black side

Dick Wilson

FOX BUTTERFIELD

China: Alive in the Bitter Sea
468pp. Hodder and Stoughton.
£9.95.
0 340 26239 7

Communist China used to be celebrated by visiting writers in heroic vein, just as India was similarly romanticized by the West until Katherine Mayo wrote a disturbing account of its sexual practices from a woman's point of view (Gandhi called it a "drain inspector's report"). Fox Butterfield's welcome book on China is not so specialized, although it does make the very Mayo-like point, inter alia, that the female orgasm seems elusive in that society. Since it probes the personal life and unofficial thoughts of the Chinese it turns what might be called a private eye on China, with shocking results for those used to the old heroics.

After a generation of books concentrating necessarily on the regime's leaders and the broad issues, this work by a young *New York Times* correspondent fluent in Chinese has taken the particularities of China as its theme, and it provides a sober antidote to those earlier volumes. Butterfield was in China in 1979-81 in the relatively liberal phase of the Deng Xiaoping regime, when the doors were opened just a little, especially to Americans, and it was possible for foreigners to get to know the Chinese through casual encounters, with little official harassment.

A government which for thirty years had been extraordinarily successful in manipulating information to its short-term advantage now stood back a little. The persistently probing, almost pedantic Butterfield took easy advantage of the new opportunities to explore a China denied to his predecessors. His findings are couched in the *New York Times* style - wordy, far too detailed - but impressively inquisitive, magisterially fair-minded and invariably telling the informant tell his own story in his own words.

And it is mostly the story of what might be called China's "black society": people and problems which fail to fit into the state mould, outside the planned sector or the unreal

columns of the *People's Daily*, the lost, the damned, the disillusioned, the angry, the frightened. So real does this society become in these pages that one has to ask how representative the data are, how we may quantify the phenomenon. There is no basis on which to decide this question, but Butterfield's contribution depends on numbers much larger than anyone had suspected. Some of his statistics, estimated thoughtfully and not wildly, speak volumes - 400,000 killed in the Cultural Revolution; 460,000 fled to Hong Kong in 1975-80; juvenile delinquency up tenfold in twenty years; 30 per cent of urban youth out of work; "hundreds of labour reform camps".

"For all of us", a doctor met on a train concludes, "the revolution is over. What is left is cynicism. It is very sad for China." A young man at a dance describes how his generation felt "manipulated and betrayed" by Mao in the Cultural Revolution. "They have seen through things" is a common remark. "Life in China is a big play, we are all actors", says a teenage girl whose teacher measures her in class to see that her clothes are within the latest guide-lines - not too tight at the hip or wide at the cuff.

A student poll in Shanghai reveals that only a third of the students believe in Marxism. A quarter list "fate" as their belief, another quarter "nothing at all" (a few answer "Christianity"). It is, Butterfield suggests, an authoritarian country with an authority crisis. Those who a few years ago were made to bow to a bust of Mao twice daily have learnt at least never to trust another Mao. "The old Confucian morality was destroyed", says a middle-aged woman, "now the Communist morality has gone, too." Small wonder the play in which the hero collapses on the ground and dies in the shape of a question-mark was disapproved by the authorities.

Cruelty is never far below the surface. Everyone remembers something from the Cultural Revolution - the girl who saw her mother clubbed to death; the teacher made to kneel before her class on broken glass; Zhou Enlai's adopted daughter tortured to death. Many of the antagonists still have to live and work together. "I haven't forgiven them," a woman teacher says, "and I wonder how they feel." "Do you know what we do with homosexuals here in China?" a dancer asks another American

journalist. "We shoot them." Sadly, families keep their oldest clothes in the bottom of a trunk just in case another levelling campaign is launched.

"Communism", a father tells his son, "is like the horizon. The more you approach it, the farther it recedes." A *People's Daily* editor informs Butterfield of the mistake they had made in 1949: "We thought the fundamental problem in China was capitalism. Actually, China was not yet industrialized and didn't have a large bourgeois class. The real problem was feudalism." (To which one is tempted to riposte - yes, but someone else got it right and his name was Chiang Kaishek!) The disarming pragmatism of the Chinese gets many things here. An official in Yunnan province told a visitor that many experiments were being tried - if they worked, they would be called socialist, if not, capitalist.

The most remarkable condemnation of Communism comes, however, not from harassed or alienated intellectuals but from the mouth of a man described merely as a male relative of Mao (presumably his nephew). Socialism, he told Butterfield after dinner, is excellent in theory but weak in practice. "We let the state and bureaucracy grow too strong and prevented the development of individual initiative." What China now needed was to combine the best of both socialism and capitalism, and he cited the Japanese example. One of Deng Xiaoping's advisers offered the astonishing opinion that "not a single element of marxist theory" remained true.

To the ordinary man it is the new class system that rankles. "We have abolished class", an official explains, "but not rank." When a socialist was sent "down to the farm" for educational labour his salary continued to be credited provided he did not tell the peasants it was *eighty times* their average income! The same Shanghai student poll listed "special privileges" as the country's most serious problem. As a well-heeled general's son puts it: "In China today it's not money but power that people want. Money is very limited in what it can buy, you need connections and rank." In China the best industrial jobs are inherited feudally from father to son, and the ties which an individual forms with his work-place or organization - *danwei* - amount to "a kind of industrial feudalism".

It goes without saying that the unsuccessful pursuit of socialism has left living standards at a sadly neglected level. A trained astronaut has neither toilet nor running water in his house. A figure of 3½ square yards of living space per person suggests that it is not just the professionals who suffer. Spending on education per head is less than in Bangladesh. Only three in 100 of college age go to university. Some ask the daring question, "Why can't China do as well as Taiwan?"

Part of the answer lies in the almost unbelievable waste and inefficiency in the Chinese economy. A government economist likens the adoption of the Stalinist industrialization model in the 1950s to "shooting oneself in the foot". A factory worker describes a retirement party for a comrade who cried, since in twenty years the factory never started because it could not get the materials - twenty years of card games on full pay. Steel-mills are kept to one or two-day working every week because of power shortages - from which cause an economist adds the estimate that one quarter of potential industrial output is lost. No one surveys the market to find out its needs before investing. The State Statistical Bureau was down to fourteen staff in the Cultural Revolution - the equivalent of one for the whole of Britain. So enshrined is the afternoon siesta that one middle-class visitor to Hong Kong was glad to get back - "it was too hectic, people have to work so hard". A Hongkong industrialist agrees: labour efficiency in the textile plant he has put up in China is only a quarter of what it is in Hongkong establishments. An American engineer who helped build a new chemical plant was stunned when the Chinese manager shut it down on the second day - "we have run out of trucks". Even the managerial reforms of Deng Xiaoping had to be shelved because of vested interests in the old inefficiency and buck-passing. The need for face - what Butterfield calls "the extreme sensitivity Chinese have about personal dignity" or "spiritual haemophilia" (quoting George Katos) - constantly interferes with Western solutions.

China's political dissidents do not need to be exposed; they expose themselves. A Shanghai poster in 1978 praising the US Declaration of Independence - "We ought to have these rights, too" - is perhaps the most poignant example here. And the

correct question is raised: why do China's intellectuals stand disconcertingly aloof from these young complainers? With the correct answer: because they work from within the system, not outside it. It is the only way to achieve anything in China.

Anyone ready to risk talking to a foreigner must by definition have a grievance. As the police said to the parents of a girl who went out with a European exchange student at Bangor University: "You should educate her not to go out with foreigners, it is a shameful thing for China." It took cabinet approval to marry a foreigner. A woman reporter of forty who goes to the *New York Times* about her one sex life and that of her colleagues was sent to a labour reform camp. That is one reason for not generalizing from such evidence. All the more so since a high proportion of Butterfield's informants turn out to be American or American-trained Chinese who went back in the 1950s to be trained in the Cultural Revolution - and now have most to gripe over, and least to lose. The woman next to Butterfield's flight out of China to return to the United States was not going back to China. "I will not make the same mistake my father did" (he was an engineer who went back to do bridge work in China until broken by the Red Guards). "He wasted his life."

When Butterfield starts to draw general conclusions - about the upbringing of children, or the economy - his methods let him down. This impressionism based on specimens and it does not explain the whole of China. But the impression is one needs to be put together with the data to delineate our total picture of this vast, still backward and unhappy land.

The written record has been a heavily biased the other way but contribution like this can only help to straighten it. Unfortunately it does offer any new insight into how China problems can begin to be solved. Such is the vested interest in the inhuman system that it will pay out on selling the Chinese people for many more years. Even then Butterfield finished his assignment, authorities were limiting his access to ordinary people, and it may be some time before we get again to reaching an inquiry into this society of Chinese life.

The rememberer

Gwyn Jones

NEIL CORCORAN

The Song of Deeds: A study of 'The Anathemata' of David Jones
120pp. Cardiff: University of Wales Press.
0 7083 0806 6

PHILIP PACEY

David Jones and other Wonder Voyagers
134pp. Poetry Wales Press, 56 Parcau Avenue, Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan. £7.95.
0 907476 14

As an old-style professor of English Language and Literature (note the two elements), and a Welshman to boot, it has been my frequent privilege to read and pass judgment on doctoral theses in that field of literature the English call Welsh and the Welsh used to call English, but have now brought themselves to distinguish as "Anglo-Welsh". This means the literature produced in the English language by authors of Welsh blood, claim, or affinity. Twenty-five years ago all these theses were about Dylan Thomas; fifteen years ago they were usually about John Cowper Powys; nowadays they have homed in on the writings of David Jones. Nothing could be more natural. All three are writers of genius or near-genius, all three are or have been "difficult", and all three stand, or stood, in need of explication.

This is what Neil Corcoran offers in his compact and well-ordered book *The Song of Deeds*, a study of that one poem of David Jones which most critics, though not necessarily most readers, consider to be his masterpiece. *The Anathemata*. His examination of it comprises five chapters dealing with the poem's intellectual context, its genesis, content, form and achievement. It certainly cannot be argued that David Jones's thirty-four-page "Preface to *The Anathemata*" and the undergrowth of information and direction thriving at the foot of most of the poem's 200 pages have done the job for him. There is just too much stuff, too much matter, too much message to percolate through the verse-stream. The provision of so much apparatus comes not by way of apology, but out of the poet's awareness that he is unlikely to achieve the hardly possible. Even so he has achieved a poetic *tour de force*, a literally wondrous artefact of and for our time. Mr Corcoran puts it this way: "The Waste Land, we might say, is a poem with notes; *The Anathemata* is that different, new and disturbing thing, a poem-with-notes." The prose notes, that is, do not so much accompany the verse as seek to make themselves part of a verse-and-prose poem. The poet admittedly doesn't help by advising the reader, "When actually engaged upon the text, to consult these glosses mainly or only on points of pronunciation"; for the normal reaction to a numbered footnote is to read the thing; and I can't be the only reader ungrateful for tips on pronunciation. If it is objected that the notes are not written for wise old owls like me, then to what corner of the aviary is this learned, multi-lingual, cultural, mythology-laden, frequently delightful and not infrequently moving commentary directed?

If *The Anathemata* were not so superb a poem the matter would hardly be worth pursuing. But it is right to spend time not only with but on the best. Thus, there is the initial problem of what the poem is, and what it is about, and what it contains that we must be seized of. It is, let us say, a long modern poem; allusive and abundant in our modern way, about - well, about mankind's history, our ancestral heritage, religion, myth and faith, and the poet's belief that man severed from his past is maimed in his being, and bereft of a Christ lacks the very axle-tree of his existence. Then comes the question of the means by which the poem's message is fitted to an art-form; and third, how assimilable are both form and message to all save a small minority of those for whom the message is intended? As between poet and reader, preacher, and congregation, these seemingly simple questions are valid: "The poet is a rememberer", says David Jones, "It is

his business to keep open the line of communication. One obvious way of doing this is by handing on such fragmented bits of our own inheritance as we ourselves have received." And, more emphatically, he describes the "mythical method" as "To conserve, to develop, to bring together, to make significant for the present what the past holds, without dilution or any deleting, but rather by understanding and transubstantiating the material, this is the function of genuine myth, neither pedantic nor popularizing, not indifferent to scholarship, nor antiquarian, but saying always: 'of these thou hast given me have I lost none'."

Which brings us again to the how and wherefore of communication. For what came, naturally to Langland, Spenser and Milton - a long poem or an all-embracing theme of private and universal import - is today out of fashion and almost out of mind.

Through these and related matters Corcoran is an informative and well-judging guide. Along with the essentials of his five chapter-heads he turns an interpreter's eye on David Jones's carefully contrived "duplicities", where an ostensibly straightforward piece of verse narrative will be found to carry a profusion of legendary, liturgical, or ironic meanings - "the larger purpose... the signs of otherness... the double vision through which all the events of *The Anathemata* are viewed". He writes with insight and sympathy of the "fragmentations" of Jones's own life and the actual and metaphorical dislocations and destructions of our century which made inevitable the "fragments" and "wedges of stuff" of Jones's shorter pieces and the "Fragments of an attempted writing" of *The Anathemata*.

David Jones and other Wonder Voyagers, as its title announces, makes a less rigorous approach to the poet. It consists of two halves, the first, "A Man Detailed", treating mainly of David Jones; the second, "Wonder Voyagers", gives a fair amount of attention to Hugh MacDiarmid, and thereafter to George Mackay Brown and Five English Poets in search of the Grail", meaning David Jones, Basil Bunting, John Heath-Stubbs, Geoffrey Hill and Jeremy Hooker. These last are a real fistful for one too overlong essay, and each poet could do with a more extended mention than he gets, but Philip Pacey has a gift of phrase and a civilized regard for the values of art which make for pleasant reading. "Why David Jones is Not a Household Name" was delivered as a lecture at the National Museum of Wales, and other of these essays have the agreeable sound of a well-informed man talking to a congenial audience. But taken together the collection has something of the air of a sighting-shot, a "Prolegomena to..." rather than a planned and finished thing. Whereas planned and finished is very much the impression given by *The Song of Deeds*.

The Mirror in the Roadway

Nature here is the multiplicity of luck such as furniture in the street when a mirror hoisting the image of a stopped truck on to a dresser top encloses its mass inside the glass square bevelled at the lip: the mirror has sheered away all save the rear view - a cargo of chairs, a place to be inserted elsewhere in the jigsaw as the truck moves off and leaves this high fragment of deserted space for the street to stare into and where the chairs had hung people it with the reflections of passer-by.

Charles Tomlinson

Kenneth O. Morgan

DAVID SMITH

Lewis Jones
91pp. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. £2.95.
0 7083 0830 9

MOIRA DEARNLEY

Marglad Evans
81pp. Cardiff: University of Wales Press. £2.95.
0 7083 0820 1

Ever since Caradoc Evans "came in like a bad smell through the windows" (to quote Gwyn Jones), the so-called Anglo-Welsh tradition has powerfully enriched our literature, both poetry and prose. Discussion of its major figures has been a central theme of the excellent University of Wales Press series, "Writers of Wales", which, since 1970, has covered writers in both Welsh and English, and has ranged from the bard Aneurin in the earliest Celtic mists down to Raymond Williams in our own time. Two attractive and welcome new additions to the series reflect, in their contrasting ways, important features of this continuing literary renaissance.

David Smith writes of Lewis Jones, agitator and folk-novelist, extraordinary, whose two novels, *Cynwaryd* and *We Live* (the latter published posthumously), lit up the literary scene in the later 1930s and whose incandescent life of rebellion spluttered out in January 1939 in his forty-second year. Lewis Jones was both a charismatic propagandist and a distinguished writer; David Smith, a professional Welsh historian with a rare gift for literary analysis, is excellent on both aspects. He sketches Jones's involvement in the upsurge of the Rhondda workers from the Tonypandy troubles in 1910 down to the hunger marches and the civil war in Spain. Here was a symbolic, almost mythical, figure of protest - lodge chairman in the Clydach Vale collieries at the age of twenty; student at the Marxist Central Labour College; spearhead of hunger marches and demonstrations by the unemployed in the years after the General Strike; Communist county councillor; recruit for the International Brigade. But what marked out Lewis Jones from other, similar working-class leaders was his genius as a self-taught chronicler of the sufferings of the South Wales miners in the inter-war period. On the suggestion of Arthur Horner (who felt that only through imaginative literature could "the full meaning of life in the Welsh mining areas" be fully conveyed), Lewis Jones traced the appalling record of industrial conflict, from the pre-war "unrest" down to the time of the Popular Front, in two remarkable novels. His writing drew its inspiration from the intense class experience of the mining community and the collective impact of the many-sided social

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Richard Harris

DENNIS DUNCANSON

Changing Qualities of Chinese Life
120pp. Macmillan. £17.50.
0 333 30682 1

The quality of life, both economic and political, has changed enormously for those four per cent of Chinese living outside the pale of the Communist mainland as well as for the hundreds of millions swept up into Mao's "new" China in 1949. The overseas Chinese were then losing their protected colonial status and have since become downgraded citizens of new nation states. Hongkong's Chinese - not strictly "overseas" by their own or Peking's reckoning - have lived in a grand hotel under British management, a hotel that has had to take in waves of refugees of immigrants, most of them escaping poverty rather than oppression. In Taiwan, a Chinese population that had been ruled by Japan for half a century has found its fortunes transformed as a point in the world's most phenomenal arc of economic success, that runs from Seoul to Singapore.

The discrepancy in numbers between the outsiders and those undergoing revolutionary turmoil inside China does not invalidate the comparison that Dennis Duncanson considers, or make it any less valuable a subject. After the war Duncanson had gone to China as a language student, to be followed by government service in Malaya, Singapore,

Hongkong and Vietnam. He visited Peking in his student days but his unceasing anti-Communist opinions would have barred him as a visitor when he returned to an academic appointment in Britain in 1969. Ten years after that, as one of a party of tourists, he was able to revisit the mainland as well as countries familiar from his earlier career, talks commissioned by the BBC from that journey are expanded in this book.

Obviously the quality of life in measurable terms of food, housing and employment was heavily in favour of the outsiders, though against this must be set the occasional brutal attacks and severe discrimination that the Chinese have suffered in Indonesia and Malaysia. But what else can be said of those living under one government in the vast political unit of the world? Since the time of Hannibal - as Duncanson pertinently reminds the reader? Governing big states, a Chinese sage remarked, must no more be overdone than boiling small fish. Undoubtedly the Chinese in 1979 were grateful to have been taken off the Maoist revolutionary boil. For thirty years they had suffered the overbearing intrusion of government loudspeakers, the compulsory political study, the damning class and political labels, the unavoidable turnout for constant demonstrations. The fish were boiled dry.

There is little reason to think that such suffering had also charged deep-seated attitudes of a kind that Duncanson had observed plainly enough among the Chinese outside. To them government was alien and to be

avoided; participation in politics was inherently unwise and not even easily understood; from this it followed that democracy, human rights, personal political choice, were as much foreign to the Chinese outside as they were to the unfreighted millions within the People's Republic. Even the Communist system imposed on China in 1949 in no sense amounted to a deprivation of rights conceded by previous régimes, as Duncanson admits.

Apart from the material differences, there are aspects of society and politics that now differ somewhat among the outsiders from those of the insiders. But the total effect of Duncanson's impressions is one of similarities. The Chinese remain Chinese, and that means that the awareness of cultural identity which has always kept alive their unity has transcended different political circumstances. The quality of Chineseness is a much cultivated one - though one wonders how long this will be true of the hybrid, now largely English-speaking Chinese of Singapore.

What is also true, and may now be more relevant as the mainland opens its doors to the outside world, is the much greater contact and experience the outsiders have had with the world, thanks to economic expansion. So, too, Deng Xiaoping's new deal, which had just got into gear when Duncanson was there early in 1979, makes for closer understanding and contact. In that different circumstances Taiwan, Hongkong and the south-east Asian Chinese will all be drawn into greater exchanges. Not so the Western democrats, who will find China perhaps

less stridently dogmatic now but no less traditionally authoritarian in its assumptions about the role of the state. It is indeed an alien society, slow to change.

Take the all-pervasive role of cadres, for a start. How can they tick the traces of the mandarins of the past? Indeed, was not Liu Shaoqi's *How to be a Good Communist* - condemned by Mao, but now handsomely republished and praised - a direct echo of the precepts that inspired the mandarins, even precisely in the idea of self-cultivation, as the Chinese title of Liu's text has it? The answer, surely, underlines the conflict between Liu, the natural inheritor of Chinese traditions in example and exhortation, and Mao, with his blind conviction in revolutionary methods, unable to perceive how ruling China needed different attitudes from those appropriate to guerrilla warfare, and ending in a megalomaniac seeking to determine the centuries ahead.

No less persistent in the new China has been the Confucian assumption that society was the unit that mattered and that the individual could flourish only in the social context. Where Mao's China bore heavily on the whole population, as Imperial government never did, was in its demand for reiterated support for doctrine as Mao dictated it. In the old China, the authoritarian context of the family required of the adolescent to "bury in his stomach" any personal opinions. Have the unrelenting pressures of Mao's rule on the Chinese, who are only too easily dragged into marching in step verbally, asks Duncanson, conditioned them to the

view that the collective interest is identical with their own?

This was certainly not true of the critical intelligence displayed on the "democracy wall", being freely used while Duncanson was in Peking, even this tiny minority, knowing, possibly, the seeds of fresh political thinking in a country that has known very little of it for most of two millennia, will find Chinese a difficult one in which to get their head to germinate.

There are other, much less publicized aspects of the Chinese, those who have lived among them and recognize in this book. There is a disposition for litigation among the people of social order, but also an essence of personal fixation. The Chinese are very moderate in their drinking habits, have a capacity to tolerate surrounding noise, are patient towards authority, are addicted to gambling, fortune-telling and astrology - these last not necessarily stamped out by Mao's puritanism and dedication to revolution.

Not all Duncanson's reflections on this country with so enduring a past have led him to revise his assumptions about Communist conspiracy. Some of his Chinese expansionism. Some of his passing remarks are jarring. Mao and his "collaborator" Ho Chi Minh, the Party's coup of 1965, or the liberation of Malaysia (in the 1940s) - but these are testy asides that blur the more rewarding perceptions of Chinese behaviour and sentimentality give his book its value.

Before, now and after

Stuart Sutherland

ELLIOTT JAKES

The Form of Time
238pp. Heinemann. £12.50.
0 8448 1394 X
Free Enterprise, Fair Employment
137pp. Heinemann. £9.50.
0 8448 1417 2

Elliott Jakes, who is best known for his studies of work, has had a varied career: apart from having been trained both as a psychologist and a psychoanalyst (an unusual combination), he has been a management consultant and a doctor, and is now a professor of sociology. As befits such a polymath, his two recent books are as different as they could be. One is a metaphysical essay that attempts to provide a new conceptualization of time, while the other suggests a practical solution to the relations between man and management, and a cure to all other economic ills, including inflation and unemployment. The former book is vague, badly argued, obscure and unbearably repetitious, whereas the latter is for the most part precise, well argued, clear and terse. The books have in common a concern for human welfare, a passionate naïveté, and a reluctance to consider alternative points of view.

In discussing *The Form of Time*, it is simplest to start with its conclusions, since the means by which they are reached are obscure. Jakes conceives of physical time as unidimensional and containing points that are related to one another by being before or after, but he claims that man's subjective concept of time is or should be (it is unclear which) two-dimensional. Following Freud, he arbitrarily divides the mind into the "conscious", "preconscious" and "unconscious", which are respectively the seats of perception, memory and desire. The conscious mind perceives moments of time occurring in succession, but for it time does not have a direction and there is no future. The main reasons given for this curious view are that one cannot refer to events in the future since they do not exist, and that the conscious mind can only perceive the present. The flow of time from future to present to past is the second axis along which time is conceptualized: this axis is perceived by the preconscious and the unconscious working. It is not clear to what extent with the conscious mind. The preconscious and the unconscious are needed for the perception of temporal flow because, according to Jakes, it requires memory and intention and desire. One can only grasp the future by forming a plan to execute a desire.

In examining these ideas, it is hard to know where to begin. Jakes states that the two kinds of time are in a

Cartesian space and are at right angles to one another, but this statement makes no sense unless it is possible to perform geometrical operations on the resulting two-dimensional space. No such operations are suggested. Moreover, it is unclear why one's present interaction with the future should depend on desires. It could depend equally on fears or merely on expectations: one can expect a future event to occur about which one's feelings are wholly neutral. Some of Jakes's problems seem to arise because he does not use the concept of representation. The conscious mind can represent the future as an expectation and the past as a memory (recovered from the preconscious); both expectations and memories are forms of representation.

Jakes claims that "there can be no spontaneous conscious knowledge of a memory-perception-desire, or a past-present-future, altogether as a past-unfocussed phenomenon, as a field of force", but no amount of rhetoric can conceal the fact that we can be consciously aware of the passage of time, as reading Jakes's book demonstrates only too well. The notion of "a mental field of force" is highly nostalgic and takes one back to Kurt Lewin and the Gestalt psychologists who flourished in the 1930s. For Jakes, however, time appears to have stood still, since his book contains almost no references to work in experimental psychology after the Second World War. He can even write "My view of protomental unconscious sensing processes as a central feature of reasoning and rationality is, of course, not a very common one." Psychologists disagree about many things, but all would agree that every conscious activity - perception, memory, learning, emotion and the use of language - depends upon a multitude of unconscious processes and that many of these processes use tacit knowledge. Any speaker of English has unconsciously learned and unconsciously deploys a vast number of grammatical rules to none of which, unless he is a linguist, does he have conscious access.

The value of a theory depends upon the use to which it can be put. In fact, Jakes does not even attempt to show that his "SD (3 + 2)" conception of space-time throws any light on human thought or behaviour. He does not even consider how the processes involved in fulfilling a desire can be explained. Instead, he turns in the latter half of his book to a discussion of "episodes". He claims that people differ in the length of time over which they can devise and execute a plan, and that the length over which the individual can plan follows a set path throughout his life depending on his capability. The evidence for this claim is too weak to take seriously. It is

derived from changes in salary with age in different professions and these salary changes are then related to the responsibility borne in the profession, which in turn is measured in terms of the maximum length of time over which someone at a given age must plan in the course of his work. It is surely obvious that not everyone is in a post that is exactly commensurate with his abilities.

Jakes's essay on time is obscurantist and his misuse of technical terms from mathematics (like "dual space") looks like an attempt to impress and mystify the reader. He makes too many dogmatic and unsubstantiated assertions, such as "What cannot . . . be built into a computer is what constitutes the decision process; namely, the nonformulated, nonexplicit, nonexplicable, unknown, nonverbalized play of unconscious forces." He is attached to multiple negatives: to adapt his own description of the preconscious, his book provides a "nonfocussed, nonformed, nonsegregated, non-discrete whole type of experience which is difficult to put into words". If you like this sort of experience, this is the book for you.

Free Enterprise, Fair Employment is very different. It puts forward a solution to current economic problems which is both novel and simple. With some reservations, Jakes accepts the benefits of a free market in commodities, but he departs from classical economics in rejecting a free labour market. He argues that in such a market levels of pay will be determined largely by coercion. Regardless of the skill they exercise, workers providing a service essential to the community can secure through strikes increases in pay that do not reflect the difficulty of their job. First, as one group increases its wages, others become envious and seek to increase theirs; this leads to a constant round of inflationary pay increases. Second, the practice of determining the value of labour by the coercive powers of employees and employer is degrading to the dignity of the worker. Third, there will be a tendency to use unemployment as the only known method of restricting pay increases. Jakes notes that pay freezes are unsatisfactory since they generate envy in workers who have not recently had an increase towards those who have, and that tying pay to productivity increases in iniquitous, since it is "a euphemism for the disruptive procedure of buying-out restrictive practices and paying bonuses to bribe people to do a fair day's work". Workers stand to gain by productivity increases in inverse ratio to their former efficiency.

Jakes's solution to the problem of wages and salaries is radical and

depends on an observation of his own which has been confirmed by others in both Britain and the USA. He measured the longest time over which workers were required to execute a plan in the course of their job ("time-span"); for example, a lathe operator would have a time-span of three days if he was turning metal components from drawings in batches that were checked every three days, while a journalist whose longest assignment was four months would have a time-span of four months. Jakes also asked the workers what they regarded as a fair rate of pay, and discovered that there was a high correlation between "time-span" and "felt-fair pay". Employees with the same time-span give approximately the same rate of pay as being fair for the job, even when they are in completely different occupations. Jakes also claims that he has evidence for seven basic brackets in time-span ranging from between one day and three months up to between twenty and fifty years, but since his proposals do not depend crucially on the precise number or size of these brackets, there is no need to discuss this dubious finding.

Jakes's main proposal is that all jobs should be assessed for their time-span, and remuneration should be directly governed by the time-span of the job. Within a given bracket, employees could move up through the range of wages or salaries allocated to that bracket according to such criteria as length of service or efficiency at doing the job. The payments to be made within each bracket would be decided by the government on a yearly basis after public discussion. The self-employed would continue to earn what the market for their labour or investments would provide.

Jakes's proposal is ingenious and could hardly fail to provide a fairer system of pay than that determined by present practice. There are, however, problems which he fails to note. First, although it may be true that individuals in jobs of the same time-span have the same felt-fair pay, this does not mean that they will agree on the relative pay that is fair for other workers with different time-spans or even with the same. Hence, the imposition of this system would be unlikely to remove all envy, though it might decrease it. Second, there would be many special cases of workers in a short time-span job whose work was particularly dangerous or unpleasant, like miners or North Sea divers, who would justifiably feel that they deserved remuneration above that commensurate with the time-span of their work. Third, it is impossible not to feel some scepticism about the accuracy of the procedures for determining time-span. Although the correlations between time-span and felt-fair pay obtained by Jakes and other investigators are reassuringly high, they presumably

knew the job a person was performing and may have been influenced in their estimates of time-span by the existing prestige of the job. Fourth, Jakes proposes that the system should be operated under full employment, but additional money could not be paid for jobs in which labour is scarce, it is hard to see how labour could be recruited for such jobs. The chronic shortage of computer programmers and systems programmers in Britain is slowly being solved by paying large salaries often to poorly qualified applicants.

Jakes points out that if his proposal were adopted, although strikes over pay would be eliminated, disputes between managers and workers might still arise over redundancy or changes in working methods. Jakes would solve these problems by means of a negotiating committee with representatives from all levels of the time-span change could be introduced without unanimous agreement between all the members. Although he sensibly sees that "What most people fail to see is that once the strike has occurred all-round agreement must be reached before work can be resumed", he fails to note that the existence of a strike provides a great impetus to both workers and management to reach agreement and that without some such impetus it might be very difficult to obtain unanimous agreement on a proposed change. Of more importance, he argues that a fair wage policy would make possible full employment without the danger of inflation. Jakes thinks employees should be a constitutional right and sensibly remarks "there is always enough work in any nation to occupy all its people fully". He scorns the idea that computers and robots will produce unemployment and points out that they should free people to do what only people can do, for example, help one another by means of work in social service. If the force of the community market failed to provide full employment, he would have the government create enterprises both public and private to absorb the unemployed.

Despite their novelty, there is a ring of common sense about Jakes's views and for that reason alone they will doubtless find short shrift with those economists whose professional existence depends on bamboozling the nation with obfuscation. Apart from their clarity, the main obstacle to accepting Jakes's proposals is that they have a Utopian feel. Surely, the solution to our economic problems could not be so simple? Or could it? Unfortunately we shall never know, since the massive conservatism of unions, employers and politicians of all parties makes it unlikely that Jakes's proposals will ever be tested in practice.

French it is *ronron*, which every schoolchild learns in the delightful song "Il était une bergère, et ron-ron-ron, petit patapon . . .". To my cat, the Italian *raffio* is almost operatic, while the German *Schnurreh* sounds sub-Wagnerian, and the Spanish *ronron* is an eternal summer siesta. But eyes closed these lovely vocalizations have been analysed and documented, in the nineteenth century, by the wit and historian Michelet, and later, during the Second World War, by an American, Milfred Melek.

We are told where Edward Lear's cat Foss is buried at San Remo, Louis Wain's cat pictures are lovingly described. There is a translation of the cat's meows, and the cat's purr is described better than the rather original or those in the musical *Cat*. By anyone else they would never have found a publisher.

These are just a few of the fascinating subjects Mr Hue covers. This is a unique and extraordinary work, and should be treasured by those who love cats, and especially by those who do not love them. After reading this book, they certainly will.

A commitment to cities

Valerie Pearl

H. J. DYOS

Exploring the Urban Past: Essays in urban history
Edited by David Cannadine and David Reeder
258pp. Cambridge University Press.
£20 (paperback, £7.50).
0 521 24624 5

DAVID CANNADINE (Editor)
Patricians, Power and Politics in Nineteenth-century Towns
227pp. Leicester University Press.
£16.50.
0 7185 1193 X

David Cannadine asks a pertinent question in a thoughtful article on the work of H. J. Dyos (in whose memory he and David Reeder have edited *Exploring the Urban Past*, a collection of twelve essays published by Dyos between 1953 and 1976): Why has urban history experienced "some loss of a sense of direction" in the past few years? He answers this question by expressing something more than a musing tribute to a leading historian. "Since Jim Dyos's death in 1978", Cannadine writes, "there has been no one equipped either as a personality or as a professor to inherit or lead the historical sub-discipline which was his personal creation." Cannadine is not alone in his view. Even during Dyos's lifetime, the "Dyos phenomenon" was recognized by one historian who described him as "midwife to an emergent branch of history, a complex phenomenon of entrepreneurship and guruship". Not only is the leader gone, we are told that the field of study he created is so reduced by his death that its very future is threatened. Cannadine fears that "thus, weakened

in its organizational zeal and coherence, there is a danger that a subject which has previously thrived on the complementary attribute of intellectual tolerance may become so diffuse and amorphous as to lose any real sense of identity".

There is no doubt about the important contribution made by Dyos to the study of towns and town life from the nineteenth century to the present day. It is demonstrated in many ways - by his own scholarly research, where he possessed an unrivalled mastery of the sources (as these reprinted essays show in their range, from his earliest, modest writings on the railway and the city to such highly developed and original studies as his work on slum life), by his activity as a teacher, and by the energy and enthusiasm he displayed as propagandist and organizer.

Cannadine rightly draws attention to the problem of urban history becoming too diffuse and amorphous; Dyos himself was aware of the danger but at the same time he argued strongly in favour of a kind of diffusiveness, describing his subject as "a field of knowledge, not a single discipline . . . but a field in which many disciplines converge, or at any rate are drawn upon. It is a focus for a variety of forms of knowledge not a form of knowledge itself". Singularly free of dogma, he welcomed the catholicity of the students of the modern town and saw in it a positive strength (as this reviewer, who benefited from his co-foundation of the interdisciplinary *London Journal*, can testify). To Dyos, the essential requirement for the study of urban history was not this or that methodology but the "degree to which it is concerned directly and generically with cities themselves, and not with the historical events and tendencies that have been purely incidental to them". What distinguishes the urban

historians, he wrote, was the "totality of their commitment to the city".

Such a total commitment is rare, however, and it has to be admitted that much that today calls itself urban history hardly fulfils that severe criterion. Moreover, some of the philosophical objections to the subject, particularly that to treating towns as exemplars of an autonomous urban reality, have not been resolved. Rather than the explanation by the loss of its ablest practitioners, have we here a sounder reason for the apparent decline in the study of urban history, or at least for the crisis in its affairs to which Cannadine draws our attention? Perhaps he goes too far when he says that, intellectually, the subject "stood for very little" at the time of Dyos's death but that the weakness of its theoretical basis may better explain its present state.

Cannadine very fairly summarizes the criticisms which have been levelled against a subject which he defines as "intellectually interdisciplinary, methodologically eclectic and spatially autonomous". To his list of criticisms one might add the view of the town as an independent variable of the historical process. He concludes that although for a variety of reasons its future is not as bright as in his heyday under Dyos its prospects can be veiled with a certain degree of optimism even if it will be "less self-consciously urban history".

It is a cautious judgment which might well have served as an epigraph to another collection of essays edited by Cannadine, *Patricians, Power and Politics in Nineteenth-century Towns* - in place perhaps of the optimistic words of Derek Fraser, the general editor of the series, who says that "urban history is an expanding [my italics] field of study". The four essays in the volume (preceded by an admirable introduction by

Cannadine), good as they are, in fact illustrate much of what has already been said about urban history regarded as an autonomous subject. The four historians concerned follow the path marked out by Cannadine in his *Lords and Landlords: the Aristocracy of the Towns* (1980) and have compressed their academic theses into lucid and succinct essays on the complex relationships between a number of landed élites and the towns which they helped to develop and with which they became closely associated: the Bute family in Cardiff from 1776 to 1947 (John Davies), the Earls of Dartmouth and of Dudley in the Black Country from 1810 to 1914 (Richard Trainor), the Hesketh and Scarisbrick families in Southport from 1842 to 1914 (John Liddle), and a group of local landowners in Bournemouth from 1850 to 1914 (Richard Roberts).

Substantially, the subject-matter is the inter-relationships between the urban populations and the patrician families, the landed élite, who owned or controlled industrial and seaside towns ripe for development and due for enormous economic and demographic expansion, mainly in the nineteenth century. The inter-relationships can be seen as part of what the late Philip Abrams (following Weber) called "the complex of domination". Something of that common theme runs through all the essays: the short-term influence and long-term decline of patrician interest and power. In the first period, when the landowners in varying degree showed remarkable initiative and enterprise, their domination appears almost complete. They developed and planned their estates, employed and managed labour, invested capital, intervened in the spiritual life of the communities, determined the types of housing and therefore the composition

of the social classes which they permitted to populate the newly developed towns, took what was almost universally accepted as their rightful and decorative places at the head of local society, and controlled the embryonic forms of local government.

Such urban domination, and augmentation of wealth and power, inevitably strengthened the position of the landed élite in national affairs. Even at the end of the nineteenth century the status of the landowners in local, as in national affairs, was considerable; as the editor notes, "in the short term there was increased scope for rural, patrician influence on most aspects of urban, industrial life". But as these case studies show, "power was gradually eroded as the towns grew in size and as the middle class élites became more confident, wealthy and united" (and, it may be added finally, in the industrial towns as an independent working-class movement emerged).

In his introduction Cannadine warns against the danger of writing with hindsight the history of urban and landed Britain in the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century. Only in the last quarter was there a quantitative weakening and fragmentation of the old landed order. The warning might also serve to show the danger of writing the history of towns without relating it to the complex of economic, social and political influences which helped to form urban society. The four essays have not fallen into such a trap, though whether this integration of the history of the landed interest in the development of some vastly different towns is urban history as a subject with any real sense of separate identity must remain an open question. But perhaps it does not matter what it is called. What has been achieved here is very good economic and political history.

Municipal manoeuvres

P. J. Waller

JOHN GARRARD
Leadership and Power in Victorian Industrial Towns 1830-80
228pp. Manchester University Press.
£21.
0 7190 0897 2

Here is an important book whose findings and argument will find a place in any future account of early and mid-Victorian urban politics. Students of local government in our own day, too, will be forced to reconsider the adequacy of their concepts and methods in the light of this work. For it is with the tools of political science that John Garrard begins and ends his book. In particular he is concerned to measure the value of elitist and pluralist models of political behaviour. He is also keen to test modern historians' assumptions that early nineteenth-century industrial towns exhibited many of the forms of an established rural order, a deferential community in which employers acted as an urban squirearchy and drew natural support from dependents who recognized common, not conflicting interests.

None of these arguments is deemed valid in the three settings Dr Garrard describes: municipal politics in early and mid-Victorian Rochdale, Bolton and Salford, where the configuration of power was far too complicated to allow interpretation by these theses. While there was, not surprisingly, a collision between social and economic standing and political office in these towns, each exhibited open features largely absent in the countryside and largely office could engender social substance as much as derive from it. But it was in policy-making and policy-execution that the power of the élites was "most circumscribed, because of the need to reckon with interests both internal and external to their towns. The latter aspect, the world beyond the municipal boundaries, is an unusual emphasis, well drawn by Garrard in a central chapter, which argues that

capriciousness characterized most local authorities' relations with each other and with Parliament.

Unpredictability also ruled within municipal borders. Groupings of factions and interests were never stable and Garrard is particularly effective at illustrating how in each town they took shape, dissolved, and re-shaped under the impress of different issues and impinging circumstances. Common questions - municipal incorporation and extension; dealings with utility companies; provision of public health and amenities; poor-law administration - produced markedly various answers in Rochdale, Bolton and Salford. Altogether, ambition was most often checked than fulfilled. Sulfidation and paralysis are terms which Garrard employs repeatedly, so frequently that use becomes an abuse, and it does not always suit the evidence which he himself supplies. For instance, if Rochdale was thwarted at Westminster it was also true that Westminster was thwarted in Rochdale, where the New Poor Law was virtually inoperable.

Garrard seems to take the ideal as the standard and to underestimate what was achieved. Progress was slow and fitful but then progress always is when consent is required, and respect for vested interests is observed. Achievement was halting, therefore, but not halted. Garrard writes clearly, without jargon or decoration, and there are frequent flashes of wit. The humour, though, is of the mortuary kind; overall there is little sense of pleasure conveyed through these pages of being a party to politics in these towns. As for life beyond politics, Garrard gives still less value (and rightly so) to the "recognized" (barely) but it is a local political traffic in these towns. Several historians have skinned the surface but none has drilled so deeply at the municipal level. Opportunities with that of others are, therefore, rare. Where it is possible to do so some differences result, though the contrast is mostly one of tone and feeling rather than of substance. Thus Garrard's account of Ashworth's role

in the building of Rochdale town hall is less generous than that in Colin Cunningham's *Victorian and Edwardian Town Halls*, 1981. He also omits to mention that the foundation-stone-laying ceremony at Bolton was cancelled and this leaves an impression that Bolton's nobles were more complacent than they were in face of public dissatisfaction with uncontrolled spending. In neither case does Garrard seriously debate aesthetic or functional merit - the architects, W. H. Crossland (Rochdale) and William Hill (Bolton) are not even named - and the impression is left that these town halls were useless extravaganzas to gratify whimsical folly.

Cunningham's book does not appear among Garrard's references; and there is no bibliography. The discussion of Salford politics is trimmed, though whether by the author's choice or publishers' insistence is unclear from the apology on p 208 which speaks of "reasons of space". References to newspapers - the main source - are excellent, giving page number as well as date; references to the secondary literature are less complete, frequently omitting the page number. The index, too, could bear improvement.

But these are quibbles. It is through such painstaking local study that a true sense of the conduct and meaning of politics can be gained. Different perspectives result when the focus is local, not national. In common opinion nineteenth-century Rochdale, means John Bright and the Co-operative Pioneers, just as twentieth-century Rochdale is epitomized by Grace Fields and Cyril Smith. Here the emphasis is different. The Co-op is valued (rightly) and Bright is recognized (barely) but it is a local political machine, Thomas Livesey, who looms largest. And it is an effective case he makes for rescuing such operators from the oversight of history. On the day of Livesey's funeral business in Rochdale ceased and the town turned out. It is as well to emphasize these things as Dr Garrard does, though; in Livesey's case, he perhaps overdoes it by having him die twice, in 1863 and 1864.

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Paul Hyland presents us with a sequence of forty poems which purport to have been written by a man who "seems to have been engaged in intelligence activities in the U.K. for a number of years", and whose background is in Eastern Europe. Z's main aim is largely autobiographical. Sometimes his work is defaced by sentimentality about class - "London smart-arse" is a phrase that really doesn't say very much - but at its best it has a convincing objectivity. "Boscombe House" shows the poet's strengths, describing the "hideout of the deposed monarch" after the royalist rout at Worcester. "We're the only visitors", and "I year old Jessie" dig at the star-headed floor nails for the sunken glist of privilege. The magpie infant's greed

Materialism & History
are not enough
I want more I want more
the hungry heart

The idea of this sequence is fascinating. Clearly, Z is in many ways an archetypal poet, for whom language constitutes a world, but he is given sufficient reality to ensure that his poems compose more than an aesthetic tract. He has a defiant pride in his art, and a persuasive foreignness when he says of Britain

A house divided
against itself
-eyes already
clogged with coin-
does not need Samson

Hyland makes us believe that this judgment on himself and on his surroundings has been earned.

It is therefore all the more disappointing not to be impressed by these poems as poems. The language does not always feel as new as it should, and is sometimes extraordinarily uneven. "Watch, listen to the audience/ collate/ designate/ transmit/ adrenalize/ instinct/ the head gathers intelligence" runs one stanza, dully ungrammatical; "The face knows nothing/ the heart knows something else" runs the next, teasingly aphoristic.

Geoffrey Adkins is a much more straightforward writer, whose subject-matter is largely autobiographical. Sometimes his work is defaced by sentimentality about class - "London smart-arse" is a phrase that really doesn't say very much - but at its best it has a convincing objectivity. "Boscombe House" shows the poet's strengths, describing the "hideout of the deposed monarch" after the royalist rout at Worcester. "We're the only visitors", and "I year old Jessie" dig at the star-headed floor nails for the sunken glist of privilege. The magpie infant's greed

for brightness is kept just this side of the crudely explicit. Adkins is delighted by the austerity of the house, unmarred by the "gaudy stories about royalty". The father's republican downness and the child's innocence of the meanings he perceives are held in an expressive balance.

The trouble is that that balance is rarely achieved. Too often the knowing adult crowds out the "wide-eyed" childishness, from which the poems would benefit. In "The Word", for example, his child's "dal dal dal" is interpreted as "It is! It is! I am!", the woods around us, shuddering green canopy, ripped through by the Word.

Again the idea of a poem and not the thing itself. Adkins' poetry is entirely lacking in verbal excitement; it conveys a social realism which may be morally honourable and at times moving, but which never risks complete commitment to a unique and necessary form of either metre or language.

When Geoffrey Adkins is a tourist he sees politics: it is very hard to make out what Glen Cavaliero sees. "At Guitborough Priory" he remembers "a true gardener/ bent on growth/ like this concluded/ arch of order"; this is clear enough, but somehow pointless. The old symbols are shuffled around, but they draw no life from the exercise. The most inventive poem in the book is about writer's block. In it, Cavaliero says of poets "Oh, we shall be bottled, stood/ as a few/ rounds/ to the eventually thirsty, found/ to be what they're after" and advises his compeer to "Sweet this out/ Let the good star tan you/ Lofty, nutty/ as a crisp and generate (for it can) your cue". He very rapidly from image to image, creating a blur in the reader's mind. Perhaps what he sees is culture. Certainly, his poems are very self-consciously poetic. Cavaliero never

relaxes: his excessive use of enjambement makes us restless, while the portentousness of his phrasing often masks vacuity. "The stroke of clock and stick provide/ the quietness of perfect sound", one landscape poem ends, and the fact that we are tempted to ask "So what?" is the fault of the poet's earnestness. His own line, "Lofty, nutty", describes this very expensive book rather well.

The bombast of Cavaliero's poems, however, is no more unlikeable than the littering complacency of Roger McGough's. "Where once/ I used to scintillate/ now I sin/ till ten/ past three", indeed: the coming of age and the weariness of the flesh serve only to remind us that McGough's real place is in the costly inane world of Poy Simmonds. All the good causes are here - love, poetry, vegetarianism and a cynicism about the values of high culture; the incoherence of believing in both the second and the fourth is amply displayed by these verses.

A good example is the final pair of

Settling for safety

Dick Davis

MICHAEL CULLUP

Reading Geographies
63pp. Manchester: Carcanet New Press. £3.25.
0 85635 429 5

KEITH CHANDLER

Kett's Rebellion and other poems
59pp. Manchester: Carcanet New Press. £3.25.
0 85635 277 2

Though *Reading Geographies* is Michael Cullup's first book, his is not a young man's poetry; he writes of a personified Sloth. "Disabused of fancies / And the grandiose / He changed nothing" and we believe him - he is, in the words of another poem, "the corrupted figure who became / Emperor of habit, the creature with a pipe". "Disabused" and "corrupted" - the poet wavers between seeing his middle age as the clear-eyed rejection of illusion, and the betrayal of youthful hope and energy; his quietism is willed but tinged with self-contempt. In the typical "A Sense of Style" he begins

Those of us who've played it safe for years
Can afford to be amused at Walt Whitman
but ends with the admission that the "we" will understand

That Walt Whitman will be read aloud
Long after our private lives have been forgotten
By hypocrites without a sense of style.
The poem has hovered between rejecting and endorsing Whitman (or at least rejecting those who would reject him), and the last line appears finally to decide the issue. But which way? Is it better to be quite forgotten or remembered by "hypocrites without a sense of style"? And are we - who do willy-nilly remember Whitman - numbered among the hypocrites? The anger and ambiguity are not a confusion but a summing-up of the poet's unresolved and contradictory perceptions.

Cullup is a poet of boredom, inconvenience, compromise and let-down; throughout the book we feel the tension between an earlier and a later self, between youth avid for magnificence and passion and relative age that looks for "The promise got at last by being still". An earlier poem, "Something impossible", recounts a simple incident that is like a metaphor for the dominant feeling of the book: a child throws a ball over a wall and waits in vain to hear it land or bounce. The poem ends

Still he heard nothing
Except, as if for the first time,
His own heart-beat.
Resolute and convincing.
Challenging the world to call his name.
But there is no response and the child is left with his own unanswered existence. The poem is dense with this taste of disillusion and foiled expectancy - a taste that inheres as

poems. "Rabbit in Mixer Survival" and "Happy Ending". The first is based on a *Daily Telegraph* report about a rabbit which fell into a concrete mixer. The rabbit is begged by young rabbits to tell the story; "the old adventurer smiled/ And wove a wrinkled paw".

Near-blind eyes began to flood
As the part that doesn't age
Drifted back to bunnyhood.

Sadly, he is being victimized, and this is "a game they played/ Crueller with each year".
"Poor old Granddad" they teased
As they one by one withdrew
"He's told it all so often
He now believes it's true."

Seen as "the old campaigner/ Imprisoned in his tale", the rabbit takes on a pathetic dignity as we see, man with a gun approaching. The "Happy Ending" is that the man has come out to commit suicide. It is that a poet should so childishly destroy the simple effects of which he is capable.

much in their clipped, design rhythms as in the vocabulary employed or the incidents recounted. Their tone has a curiously unconvincing, deliberate lack of resonance about it that can result in the verse of C. H. Sisson or Geoffrey Grigson; it is not the knowledge of the dandy but the self-awareness of one on whom - in Grevel's phrase - "the black ox hath trod".

The poems are not all gloom and doom; true, there are some very high lipped, desperate lines about the beloved behaving rather like the world in "Something impossible", refusing the answering gesture he would confirm the poet's status and worth), but the poems are not from mawkishness and self-pity. By irony. The laughter is not like "Porridge" (boredom being evoked by the image of a "old shagged cat... A sack of 'and mangle'"). "Sleeping Apes" and "Rained Angles" have an unnervingly sour edge which it is laughter nevertheless.

It would be perverse to expect glittering metaphors, or Yeatsian rhetoric from a poet of Cullup's acquired preoccupations. Indeed, Cullup clearly doubts whether he can find a key to analysing the processes of rationalization and the limits of a purely formal or "objectivistic" approach to such processes. It is on the basis of these two shifts that Habermas defines his task: that of elaborating a theoretical framework which demonstrates the interconnections of communicative action and social systems, while at the same time providing a basis for comprehending the tensions and tendencies, the conflicts, crises and potentialities, of the modern era.

In formulating the concept of communicative action, Habermas wishes to draw attention to what he calls "the validity basis of speech". Speaking is a way of acting: this was already stressed by J. L. Austin and others, Habermas is interested, not so much in the particular acts one can perform with specific utterances, but rather in the general presuppositions that we make in uttering and responding to speech-acts. In uttering an expression the speaker makes an offer which the hearer can either accept or reject. Suppose a flight attendant says to a passenger, "You must stop smoking now". The attendant is making an offer - or, as Habermas prefers to say, raising a validity-claim - which the passenger can accept by extinguishing the cigarette or reject by asking "Why?". In the latter case the attendant must give some reasons or grounds which would support the validity-claim raised with the speech-act, for example by pointing out that the plane will soon be landing and that the safety regulations stipulate no smoking at such a time. The validity-claim raised with a speech-act is thus internally connected with reasons or grounds, and it is this internal connection which shows that there is a "rationally motivating force" operating within the process of communication. A speaker can rationally motivate a hearer to accept his speech-act offer, writes Habermas, "because he can assume the warrant for providing, if need be, convincing grounds which would stand up to the hearer's criticism of the validity-claim."

It is against the background of this Weberian reorientation of Marxist thought that one can reconstruct some of the major strands in the work of Jürgen Habermas. Since his earliest writings Habermas has been concerned with the "historical" processes whereby the "public sphere" of open argumentation and debate - a sphere which flourished in eighteenth-century Europe - has been increasingly restricted by the growth of large-scale economic and administrative organizations. These organizations can be understood as systems of goal-directed action, and their growth seen as a type of rationalization which threatens to overrun every sphere of life, disrupting patterns of interaction and stifling processes of communication. Such is the central theme of Habermas's most recent work, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, a substantial two-volume study that displays all of the rigour and systematicity, the vision and originality, which have justly earned him the reputation of being the foremost social and political thinker in Germany today.

While Habermas accepts the importance of Weber's theory of rationalization for understanding the development of Western societies, he believes that this theory must be revised considerably. To begin with, one must take account of two theoretical "shifts" which occurred in philosophy and social science subsequent to Weber and to those early "critical theorists" influenced by him. The first shift is from a teleological concept of action - that is, from viewing action as the successful pursuit of an agent's aims or desires - to a concept of *communicative action*, which emphasizes the interaction in which two or more subjects seek to reach an understanding concerning their shared situation. Underlying this first shift is the transition from a philosophy centred on the conclusion, to the formation and separation of a capitalist economy and a bureaucratic state administration; and to the emergence of a methodical conduct of life directed to calculation and personal gain.

JÜRGEN HABERMAS

Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns

Band 1, Handlungsrationality und gesellschaftliche Rationalisierung. 534pp.
Band 2, Zur Kritik der funktionalistischen Vernunft. 633pp.
3518 07591 8

RENÉ GÖRTZEN

Jürgen Habermas: Eine Bibliographie: seiner Schriften und der Sekundärliteratur 1952-1981.
230pp. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.
3518 07597 7

Social theorists have long been concerned with the question of what defines the societies in which we live as distinctively modern. What are the key features which differentiate the "developed" societies of Europe and North America from their historical predecessors, as well as from those forms of social organization which have persisted elsewhere in the world? Among the classical social theorists it was above all Max Weber who addressed himself directly to this question. In his celebrated study of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, and in his detailed investigations of the great religions of the world, Weber sought to identify some of the characteristics peculiar to Western civilization. He called attention, for example, to the development of natural science and its institutionalization in the universities; to the formation and separation of a capitalist economy and a bureaucratic state administration; and to the emergence of a methodical conduct of life directed to calculation and personal gain.

Weber placed particular emphasis on the latter characteristic, for he regarded the transformation in the aims or orientations of action as a crucial factor in the rise of capitalism. The forms of Protestantism which appeared in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries called for a change of attitude and thereby enabled individuals, in the name of a religious ethic, to engage in restless worldly activity. Once the system of capitalist activity had been established, it could dispense with the religious conditions that originally made it possible. Capitalism, dynamic and victorious, acquired an autonomy of its own; together with the expansion of state administration, it led to the progressive "rationalization" of action domains, and that is, to the progressive assimilation of all types of action to a model in which the actor is concerned to calculate the most suitable means for the attainment of specific ends or goals. Weber's prognosis for the future of those societies overturned by such developments was largely pessimistic: "Specialists without spirit, sensualists without heart; this nullity imagines that it has attained a level of civilization never before achieved."

Since the early 1920s the writings of Weber have had a sobering effect on certain forms of Marxist thought. The capacity of advanced capitalist societies to stifle and absorb forces of opposition, as well as the appearance of oppressive régimes in societies writing the banner of socialism, seemed to lend support to Weber's pessimistic prognosis. The final conclusion to this line of reflection was drawn in the 1940s by some members of the so-called Frankfurt School. Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno and others came to see the pervasive and seemingly irreversible spread of "instrumental reason" as the very medium of social repression. Marx's confidence in the emancipatory consequences of expanding forces of production was abandoned.

It is against the background of this Weberian reorientation of Marxist thought that one can reconstruct some of the major strands in the work of Jürgen Habermas. Since his earliest writings Habermas has been concerned with the "historical" processes whereby the "public sphere" of open argumentation and debate - a sphere which flourished in eighteenth-century Europe - has been increasingly restricted by the growth of large-scale economic and administrative organizations. These organizations can be understood as systems of goal-directed action, and their growth seen as a type of rationalization which threatens to overrun every sphere of life, disrupting patterns of interaction and stifling processes of communication. Such is the central theme of Habermas's most recent work, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, a substantial two-volume study that displays all of the rigour and systematicity, the vision and originality, which have justly earned him the reputation of being the foremost social and political thinker in Germany today.

Reaching an understanding

John B. Thompson

According to Habermas, at least three distinguishable validity-claims are raised with the utterance of speech-acts. A speaker may raise the claim that the statement made is true; that the speech-act is correct in terms of the prevailing normative context; and that the intention of the speaker is as it is expressed, that is, that the speaker is sincere in what he or she says. In raising these claims the speaker takes up relations to any of three object domains or "worlds", with regard to which a claim can be contested by a hearer: the *objective world* as the totality of entities about which true statements are possible; the *social world* as the totality of legitimately regulated interpersonal relations; and the *subjective world* as the totality of experiences to which the speaker has privileged access. Not all of these validity-claims and corresponding world-relations are brought into play equally and explicitly with the utterance of every speech-act. Particular types of speech-act give prominence to specific validity-claims and world-relations, as the issuing of commands, for example, highlights the claim to correctness and the relation to the social world. But Habermas maintains that with every speech-act attention to reaching understanding, as distinct from action oriented merely to the actor's own success, the speaker necessarily raises (albeit implicitly) all three of the claims which attest to the validity basis of speech.

In everyday interaction we seldom pursue the lines of inquiry rendered possible by the presupposed validity-claims. We take it for granted that the claims are satisfied, or could be satisfied, and thus share with our participants in interaction a common set of convictions, a common *Lebenswelt* or "life-world". The life-world of a society or social group preserves and transmits the interpretative work of preceding generations. It creates a symbolic space, as it were, within which cultural tradition, social integration and personal identity are sustained and reproduced. These forms of "symbolic reproduction" must be distinguished from the processes whereby societies produce the goods and services necessary for the material welfare of their members. The latter processes can be conceptualized in terms of "functional systems" which co-ordinate actions around specific mechanisms or "media". In capitalist societies the most important example of such systems is the market, where the actions of individuals are co-ordinated around the medium of money. The state administration may also be regarded as a functional system, organized in this case around the medium of power.

The distinction between system and life-world, and the link between the life-world and the concept of communicative action, provide Habermas with the theoretical means to reformulate Weber's theory of rationalization. One must distinguish, argues Habermas, between two processes of rationalization which are in principle complementary, although in certain circumstances they may give rise to contradictory effects. With the evolution from clan societies through traditional to modern societies, system and life-world gradually separate and thenceforth follow their own paths of rationalization. The rationalization of social systems can be characterized in terms of their *growth in complexity*; thus the transition from traditional to modern societies in Europe can be viewed in part as the formation and expansion of markets organized around the medium of money. The rationalization of life-worlds, on the other hand, can be characterized in terms of both the *separation of spheres of value* and the *advancement of levels of learning*. In the development of legal institutions, for example, one can trace a process whereby law becomes increasingly divorced from morality, and increasingly linked to what Habermas calls, following Piaget, a "post-conventional" pattern of conflict resolution. The rationalization of the life-world gradually calls into question the traditional assumptions and convictions upon which interaction rests, so that symbolic reproduction

becomes potentially more dependent on the lines of inquiry opened up by the validity basis of speech.

The two paths of rationalization are not, however, unconnected; and it is in terms of their intersection that one can, Habermas contends, understand some of the traits and tensions of the modern era. While the rationalization of the life-world increases the *potential* for linking symbolic reproduction to the validity basis of speech, at the same time it allows for further growth in the complexity of systems which react back on the life-world and threaten to stifle that potential. This is what Habermas calls "the inner colonization of the life-world". The processes of material production overstep the boundaries of the economic and administrative systems, giving rise to crises which "can be avoided only at the cost of disturbances in the symbolic reproduction of the life-world". In order to explain why this inner colonization occurs, Habermas develops an account which, while drawing on Marx, nevertheless recognizes that Marx's analysis cannot be applied directly to contemporary capitalist societies. For in these societies the state has assumed a major role in attempting to control the conflicts and crises stemming from the economic sphere. Hence the basic tensions that characterize our societies today are not manifested directly in the form of class conflict, but rather are displaced on to those points of friction where the economic and administrative systems impinge upon the life-world. New conflicts arise in the spheres of cultural reproduction and social integration, new groups appear which protest against the uncontrolled growth of system complexity. From this perspective one can appreciate the significance of popular movements advocating ecology and peace, such as the "Greens" in Germany or the CND in Britain. Such movements indicate, in Habermas's view, that the major problems facing advanced industrial societies have to do with the self-destructive consequences of system growth - a growth which threatens to silence that potential for reflection which, with the rationalization of the life-world, has become accessible to us.

In the 1,200 pages of *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* Habermas develops these arguments with a philosophical rigour and historical depth that can hardly be conveyed in the space of a short review. Yet the preceding paragraphs provide sufficient content for considering several objections that may be levelled against Habermas's approach. While the concept of communicative action is of great interest, one may doubt whether it can bear the enormous theoretical burden which is placed upon it. Within the utterance of an ordinary speech-act Habermas develops, not only the presuppositions of the validity-claims and their corresponding world-relations, but also the assumption that these validity-claims can be made good or "redeemed" through processes of argumentation which take form in specific types of discourse and criticism. We might well be surprised by the weighty implications of our words! In just what sense, we might well ask, are claims to truth and correctness - let alone "theoretical" and "practical" discourses with their complex logical machinery and strong normative assumptions - implicated in the "mundane" greetings we issue to acquaintances or strangers on the street, in the light-hearted joking that fills much of the linguistic exchange among friends, or in any number of the practices that constitute the communicative texture of everyday life. Habermas has a response to this line of criticism, but the reader will doubtless be dissatisfied with the arguments which are supposed to show that "action oriented to reaching understanding" can be regarded as "the original mode of language use".

It is part of Habermas's view that the full implications of communicative action are not manifest everywhere and at all times, but come to light only in the course of social evolution. The modern understanding of the world, he argues, recognizes different validity-claims and distinguishes several object domains. It is the result of processes of rationalization; it contrasts markedly with the "mythical thought" studied by anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss. Habermas is not content, however, with contrasting the modern and mythical forms of thought. He wishes to ascribe a certain universality to the modern form of understanding, to defend what he regards as "the justified claim to universality on behalf of the rationality that gained expression in the modern understanding of the world". There is a touch of paradox about this attempt to defend such a claim at a time when so many modern thinkers are busy dismantling it. And indeed, the considerations which Habermas adduces in this regard are not altogether convincing. He leans heavily on the contributions of "reconstructive sciences", like the developmental psychology of Piaget, since he believes that the claim to universality cannot be defended in a purely philosophical way. But this appeal to Piaget, this unhesitating projection of cognitive stages of development on to the history of world-views, will leave many doubts in the minds of readers who are less sure that they have approached the pinnacle of the phylogenetic scale.

It would be one-sided to assess Habermas's work in conceptual and theoretical terms without appreciating its significance as a *Gegenwartigskritik*, an analysis of the present day. The way in which Habermas uses his framework to interpret contemporary social processes is illuminating and highly suggestive. Nevertheless, for those who live in the industrial societies of today, the analysis offered may seem somewhat narrow and out of date. With unemployment at unprecedented levels and still climbing, with fluctuating interest rates and low demand pushing many businesses to the wall, the notion that tensions stemming from the productive sphere are managed by the state and displaced into other domains appears to require more qualifications than it may have needed a decade ago. Moreover, a society, perhaps "a nation-state", remains the *pièce de touche* of Habermas's account. Nowhere does he consider in detail the international system of nation-states, the multinational alliances which profoundly affect economic development, and threaten one another's survival with the accumulated means of waging war. It is at best incomplete to interpret the conflicts and protest movements of our societies from within a framework that filters out the confrontation of nation-states and the politics of mass destruction.

Whatever limitations there may be to Habermas's approach, there can be no doubt that *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* represents a major contribution to contemporary social theory. Not only does it provide a compelling critique of some of the main perspectives in twentieth-century philosophy and social science, but it also presents a systematic synthesis of many of the themes which have preoccupied Habermas for thirty years. The reader who wishes to pursue the itinerary of Habermas's thought, will find a valuable aid in the bibliography compiled by René Görtzen, who lists some 250 publications by Habermas and nearly a thousand items of secondary literature. This bibliography is a remarkable testimony to the productivity of, and public acclaim accorded to, an author who has consistently and courageously defended the value of open argument and debate.

In *The New Working Class? White-Collar Workers and their Organizations: A Reader* (285pp. Macmillan, £20, paperback £7.95, 0 333 27283 8) Richard Hyman and Robert Price have assembled significant contributions from the literature of this subject. Papers are grouped under eleven headings that include "Technicians in Modern Capitalism", "The Search for Theory: Synthesis of Dissonance?", "The Early History of White-Collar Unionism", "White-Collar Union Character" and "White-Collar Work and Attitudes to Trade Unions".

The poetry of piety

C. H. Sisson

C. A. PATRIDES (Editor)

George Herbert: The Critical Heritage

390pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £25.

0 7100 9240 7

It says something about current academic practice that Routledge and Kegan Paul succeed in marketing, under the title of the Critical Heritage Series, bundles of criticism of writers who have hardly had time to collect a heritage of any kind. However useful it may be to have compendia of what has been said about Eliot, Pound, Joyce, Forster, William Carlos Williams, Beckett, Nabokov or even George Orwell – and here, if not before, one's confidence begins to sag a bit – all they can contain is near-contemporary appreciations on which the irony of time has barely begun to play. With George Herbert (1833–1833) the case is quite different. C. A. Patrides has had four centuries to draw on, and he has wisely restricted the twentieth century to less than eighty pages and the nineteenth century to little over a hundred, so enabling himself to give almost comprehensive coverage to what comes before that. We thus have matter for a study not only of the ups and downs of a reputation but of changes in approach to the poetry and indeed in critical habits at large.

The matter from the seventeenth century is hardly literary-critical at all, in any of the ways in which that term is now understood. It starts with a mere exchange of verses between friends – Donne's lines to Herbert, sent with one of his seals "Of the Anchor and Christ", and Herbert's reply. Next comes Bueon's dedication of his *Palmer*, a polite return for Herbert's share in translating *The Advancement of Learning* into Latin and perhaps with the *arriere-pensée* that Herbert's would be a good name to invoke as he ventured into the fields of poetry and piety, for neither of which the former Lord Chancellor was himself famous. Then we come to Nicholas Ferrar and with him to the point which has exercised Professor Patrides most, in making his collection, that of an "ulterior motive" standing in the way of what he regards as the proper appreciation of the "poetry as poetry". People will regard Mr Herbert as holy, and *The Temple* as an aid to devotion. It is no good expecting anything better from Nicholas Ferrar, who was busy at Little Gidding with similar concerns and since it was to Ferrar that Herbert delivered his manuscript, on his death-bed, with instructions to publish or destroy as he thought best, he must be regarded as being as close to Herbert's mind as anybody. Is that a critical consideration? It might be. As it is, it is dangerous ground. Patrides calls attention to, Vaughan's regrettable emphasis on Herbert's "holy life and verse". As if a life could equal a verse, he seems to say – or perhaps only, "as if a life should be taken account of, in reading a verse". Of course it often is, in the case of lives which make a point of being rather unholily – no more popular subject, in fact.

But of course Patrides is right to feel anxious. We have seen the name of Rimbaud swept along on a tide of notions as to what constitutes the good life, to thousands who do not care for his exciting poetry. Such figures caught in political currents and the sale of *The Temple* – 20,000 copies in the years to 1970 – must owe a lot to the banning of Anglican worship and the suppression of episcopacy, to say nothing of the death of the king in 1649. Patrides gives us at length Benjamin Olney's *Refractory View of the Life of Mr George Herbert*, "only just" published, and he tells us, "Water acknowledged" by Walton – as indispensable for some of those truths he himself was to extend. Walton's *Life* of course dominates the "heritage" of the seventeenth century, and the biographers, in so little "critical". We are given an interesting extract from Ralph Knevet, not published until 1966. Knevet, though anxious to follow Herbert, in his *Devotions*, must count as a man of letters for he attempted to complete *The Poet's Poem* as well as to imitate

Herbert. He is well read and tells us that "Dante affords us better matter than words" – which shows how greater poets than Herbert have sunk from critical comprehension in their time; he also makes the good point that the matter of *The Temple* is better than that of the "sublimated Wites of our Nation" whose one notion is "to idolize some silly scornful woman into a fool's Paradise of self admiration". Seventeenth-century criticism comes alive for Patrides with what he calls Dryden's "explicitly pejorative allusion to Herbert's mode of articulation" when he banishes Shadwell to "some peaceful Province in Acrostick Land", but too much should not be made of this, which merely tells us that Dryden was heading in another direction, as we knew already. More significant evidence of the reception of Herbert's verse towards the end of the century is the collection of thirty-two poems into a hymn-book, in 1697, and the charming "Youth's Alphabet: or, Herbert's Morals", which Patrides calls "doggerel".

The eighteenth century opens with a flourish with Joseph Addison, that merely fashionable man, explaining in the *Spectator* that the taste of the best poets has changed in a way that the town may not yet appreciate. It is thirty years after Dryden's crack, and that is about the time that such things still take. "This fashion of false wit . . . in particular may be met with among Mr Herbert's Poems." Then comes an awful exhibit in the form of an extract from a "considerable manuscript", happily unpublished, by one George Ryley, of whom nothing is known except this melancholy monument, which comprises "elaborate annotations" on *The Temple*, the "actual meaning" of which "was deemed to require explication in depth". I recommend a posthumous PhD for this author. In 1725 there are still some verses from John Reynolds, "a moderate dissenting minister", celebrating the "seraphic singer" in eighteenth-century style, and incidentally, distinguishing sharply between Herbert and the opportunist Christopher Harvey who had long ago managed to get his verse bound up with Herbert's. That seems to me evidence of continuing life of a kind, even though Reynolds regretfully regarded Herbert as a saint. Patrides makes an interesting allusion to Dr Johnson and in the same breath that he tells us that there are seventy-eight references to Herbert in the *Dictionary* exclaims: "How fortunate for Johnson that no second hand reports of his views exist!" He would have made a fool of himself, Patrides implies. I do not think so, though Johnson would, of course, have shared the fatal weakness of so many others for Herbert's piety. Wesley – a tainted source again – loved Herbert and setting himself boldly against the taste of the day asserted that his poems were "scarce inferior either in sense or language to most compositions of the present age" – a mastery underestimation. Cowper at twenty-one "pored upon" Herbert's poems all day long and his malady "never seemed so much alleviated" as while he was reading him. These may not be the tributes of literary critics, but they demonstrate that, if *The Temple* was less well known than in the previous century, it continued to attract the sort of readers its author would have wished to have.

It is in the nineteenth century, to which, after all, Patrides's conception of "poetry as poetry" really belongs, that what he sees as the critical dilemma in relation to Herbert really surfaces. Coleridge, with whom this section of the volume properly begins, speaks of Herbert as "comparatively little known" and praises him as an "exquisite master of the most correct and natural language" but adds that he is "a poet of genius, the merits of whose poems will never be felt without a sympathy with the mind and character of the man". Emerson, though already far from the forms of thought of the seventeenth century, is not clearly felt this sympathy; only his religion was a vaguer one and for him "criticism is silent in the exercise of higher faculties". Ruskin saw in Herbert "the purest uncorrupted Christianity" and claimed to owe to him "whatever has been meant or

happiest in the course" of his own life. We are moving into an aura of that nineteenth-century religiosity. George Eliot misquotes Herbert and spoils the rhythm. James Montgomery, a prolific writer of verse among which only the old hymn has escaped oblivion, saw "devotion turned into a masquerade" throughout Herbert's writings; no doubt he could not stomach the familiar style and the unfamiliar ideas. *The Temple* of the nineteenth century is really *The Christian Year*, and the difference between the two books marks the decline in theological intelligence and sensibility, as well as in the general use of theological conceptions. Keble puts in a good word for himself by suggesting that Herbert is one of those who "appear rather to fall in . . . incidentally" with the "deepest subjects" instead of having "sought them purposely" – a good point, if one understands the implications in a sense the opposite of Keble's; for him the result of Herbert's method was "inappropriate, not to say chilling and repellent". Patrides is right to see ecclesiastical designs in the frequent republication of Herbert in the nineteenth century, but he does not indicate that the theological revival of the period was accompanied by a massive reprinting of older literature – the Parker Society's reprints, the works of Hooker, Cranmer, Andrews, Bramhall and many more, to the enrichment of the sensibility of the twentieth as well as of the nineteenth century. Picking, to whose edition of Herbert Patrides draws attention, also brought out editions of Jeremy Taylor and Fuller. There is no separating the revival of *The Temple* from the theological movements. The danger, as Patrides

points out, was that to many readers "Herbert emerged as a proper Victorian" – though it is rather odd to talk of *The Temple* being "converted into a collection of poems replete with edifying matter". A. C. Benson, towards the end of the century, is surprisingly good in his distinction between Herbert's "curious elaboration of expression, an intensity of compression" and Keble's "indefinite garrulity, a tendency to diverge on side issues, a rapid displacement of language".

Patrides limits himself to the first third of the twentieth century; the last extract is dated 1936. It cannot be said that much enlightenment emerges from the early entries – from Dowden, William Alexander or H. C. Beeching, though Dowden does quote Sir John Coleridge's sensible remark that "if Herbert's words are sometimes hard, you may at least be sure that they always have a meaning" – which is really the discovery, if you call it a discovery, of the twentieth century. Clutton-Brock comes up with the observation that Herbert's thought "is less old-fashioned than that of most of the poets of the eighteenth or even the nineteenth century". We are in the world of Grierson and ultimately of Eliot, though we have still the bumbling Basil de Selincourt in, I am afraid, this very journal (TLS, March 2 1933). The selection concludes with an excellent extract from Austin Warren in the *American Review*. Warren invokes William Law, showing a sense of the traditions essential for an understanding of Herbert. He notes Herbert's fondness for "homely analogies and illustrations" and that "when writing for himself, not for

Dangerous disjunctions

David Nokes

JEREMY TREGLOWN (Editor)

Spirit of Wit: Reconsiderations of Rochester

199pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £14. 0 631 12897 2

"Lord Rochester", remarked Pope, was "a holiday poet", one of that "mob of gentlemen who wrote with ease". Nowadays, as Peter Porter observes in his essay "The Professional Amateur", this charge of dilettantism presents far more of an obstacle to Rochester's reputation than his notorious obscenity. Modern readers who can happily swallow down four-letter words find the affectations of aristocratic wit in his verse. In fact Rochester's ease was as much a product of study as of style. He was a master of the art that conceals art. His serious output, like his life, was brief and gaudy; a dozen lyrics, a dozen lampoons and half-a-dozen satires. Yet, argues Porter, the quality of those satires was surpassed only by Pope himself. "He passed the baton on to Pope and thereby on to the rest of English poetry. It never went through Dryden's hands."

Defining the elusive quality that marks out Rochester's poetry from that of the rest of the mob of gentlemen is the business of several of the essays in *Spirit of Wit*. For the editor, Jeremy Treglowne, the distinctive quality is "an idiosyncratic complexity of 'style'". While for Barbara Everett it is the "dangerous disjunctions of language" which locally fracture the style, like the minute cracks that beautify crackleware ceramics. John Widders takes issue with L. C. Knights's well-known distinction between the poets of the early seventeenth century, such as Donne and Herbert, and those of the Restoration. According to Knights, the works of the former are characterized by a recognition of "the multiple nature of man", whereas the Restoration poets presented a "reductive simulacrum only, stressing man to the exclusion of other qualities". Eliot's antique theory of the disjunction of the mind and body, Widders successfully indicates several of the shared themes and attitudes that bridge the temporal gap between Donne and Rochester. The special

achievement of both men, he argues, is to create "the impression of an underlying insecurity at the very moment when [they] seem most assured".

The Earl of Clarendon accounted for the cynicism and libertinism of the mob of gentlemen and their friends by the fact that they "had been born and bred in those corrupt times when there was no King in Israel". Theirs was a generation to which morality, like power, seemed up for grabs. "There was nothing to do," writes Porter, "but act up." The upheavals in the social hierarchy made this generation of young aristocrats, as Basil Greenslade remarks in his essay, "Affairs of State", "a ready-made audience for Hobbes's *Leviathan*". Nearly all of the contributors note Hobbes's influence on Rochester, and Barbara Everett makes it the centre-piece of her interesting essay, "The Sense of Nothing". She detects, in all Rochester's poems, a deliberate hollowiness beneath the facade, "what medicine calls a shadow behind the heart". But there is more to Rochester than versified Hobbes; and Porter, while agreeing that "Rochester's special quality as a poet is his presentation of Nothing", can also assert with cool hyperbole that "Rochester's songs are 'the finest lyrics between Shakespeare and W. H. Auden'".

Such judgments lean heavily on the donkey-work of bibliography since, with a truly aristocratic disregard for regularity, Rochester left his poems in a scatter of drafts and fragments. As Treglowne remarks: "Considering how distinctive a tone of voice Rochester's is, generally thought to be, it's surprising how many other people's voices have been mistaken for it." This being so, the contributors to this volume are rather grudging about David Vellit's achievement in providing us with an unexpurgated edition of *The Complete Poems*. Both Everett and Raman Selden object to Vellit's adoption of a modern style of typography, and Everett even seems to hanker after the under-the-counter editorial style of the old Muses Library edition in which the naughty bits – or at least the less explicit of them – were buried among the notes at the back of the book. The resulting lacunae represented a literalization of Rochester's celebration of nothing by indicating places in the text where "the poet" was taking on "the thin ice of obscenity" has fallen in.

"labouring people", he used such analogies as they would understand. He remarks that "his structure is that of the English Bible . . . His syntax rarely admits inversion or any other mode of inversion; dislocation; his sentence structure is that of good conversation – though firm, yet supple and easy." It is these of critical summaries.

Throughout the centuries of the "heritage", Herbert refuses to disappear behind his poems, perhaps because he moves so small a distance from the centre of his own mind. The general question this volume raises is indeed whether there is such a thing as "poetry as poetry". What would be? If poets say anything, if in fact they have human speech, like the rest of the world, there is no unwinding Herbert from the cocoon of meaning wrapped about him, or of understanding him except as part of the literature of Anglicanism, now treated with contempt by those who are supposed to be its guardians. There is a sense in which a religion is a literature, or a least cannot exist without one. For the literary critic – and for that more important character, the reader – no older literature can survive only so as the past remains alive, and that means having some sense of its religion. What was said about Herbert in the seventeenth century, however injudicious in the light of modern critical theory, is more important than what our own century has managed to say about him, and Walton's *Life* is the best introduction to *The Temple*.

Finally, it must be pointed out that for £25 the purchaser will get only reproduction from edited typescripts, more like a thesis than a book.

Sarah Wintle examines Rochester's male libertinism from the standpoint of modern female liberation. Rochester rejected one conventional view of females should be sexually more passive – but replaced it with another, despoiling cock-hungry women who find men more inadequate than Signor Dildo is their lord. Rochester finds nothing disturbing about such appetites in themselves, for as he observes, "there's something general in mere lust". But Wintle detects a certain anxiety at the threat to the social order posed by the tasteless indiscriminate of female passion.

The volume concludes with two essays which discuss Rochester's relations with Dryden and Shadwell, a "hedge-hopping" commentary on an *Allusion to Horace* Pat Rogers notes that "dry-bob" – Rochester's epithet for Dryden – refers not only to cologne without emission but also to "a donkey that does not break the skin" (Dryden). Selden further reminds us that Dryden is a character in Shadwell's play *Humourist* (1671), "a concealed poet who prides himself on his wit and 'Reperities'". Selden suggests that Rochester may have been more sympathetic towards Shadwell than has yet been realized. "That there should be some affinity between an aristocratic court wit and a bourgeois moralist seems at first unlikely," he admits. But the link is to be found in that famous ease with which both men prided themselves on writing, "Men of quality" boasted Shadwell, "that write for their pleasure, will not trouble themselves with exactness in their plays." He shrugged off the faults in his play *The Sullen Lovers* by claiming that the whole thing had been written in five weeks. "In those few hours snatched from friends and wine," Selden suggests, that Rochester and Shadwell a fellow-amateur, unlike the laborious professional, Dryden.

Something of this attitude of ease permeates this volume; not that the essays are either amateurish or careless, but they are generally unimpressive: people have flogged images (all of course indispensable to themselves) are somehow treated as self-sufficient stand-ins for them. Joan Sellen's article, for example, on Shakespeare's syntax, vocabulary and images (all of course indispensable to themselves) are somehow treated as self-sufficient stand-ins for them. Joan Sellen's article, for example, on Shakespeare's syntax, vocabulary and images (all of course indispensable to themselves) are somehow treated as self-sufficient stand-ins for them. Joan Sellen's article, for example, on Shakespeare's syntax, vocabulary and images (all of course indispensable to themselves) are somehow treated as self-sufficient stand-ins for them.

Benevolence and beneath

Nicholas Grene

STANLEY WEINTRAUB (Editor)

The Playwright and the Pirate: Bernard Shaw and Frank Harris. A Correspondence

273pp. Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe. £11.50.

0 85140 131 X

STANLEY WEINTRAUB

The Unexpected Shaw: Biographical Approaches to G. B. S. and His Work

254pp. New York: Unger. \$22.50.

0 8044 2974 X

The stocks of Shaw show no sign of running out before the year 2000. The letters in particular seem all but inexhaustible. Only two of the four volumes of Dan H. Laurence's edition of the *Collected Letters* have yet been published and, though each volume runs to some 900 pages, it represents no more than a restricted sample of the extant material. The individual correspondences continue to appear separately. Last year it was a collection of the letters with Lord Alfred Douglas; this time, equally implausibly, it is Frank Harris.

The connection began in 1895 when Harris took over the *Saturday Review* and engaged Shaw as his drama critic. It was Harris's most successful editorship and the culmination of Shaw's work as a critic. In 1898 when Shaw retired from full-time journalism and Harris sold the *Saturday Review*, their working association came to an end. There are no letters from this period and no sign that they had become close friends; Shaw disliked the bibulous Monday lunches at the Café Royal which Harris gave for *Saturday Review* contributors and had little time for the Frank Harris atmosphere of "brag and bawdry". They remained only very sporadically in touch until 1915 when Harris, by then permanently out of England with a scabrous financial and editorial record behind him, had become even

more notorious for his pro-German stand in the war. Shaw, who did not share Harris's enthusiasm for Germany but who had made himself unpopular enough with his pamphlet *Common Sense about the War* in 1914, wrote to the *New Statesman* to denigrate the abuse poured out on Harris. The incident served to re-open the correspondence between the two.

The bulk of the letters in *The Playwright and the Pirate* (Shaw frequently referred to Harris as a buccaneer sailing the Spanish Main) are drawn from two periods: 1915 to 1923 when Harris was editing the left-wing *Pearson's Magazine* in New York, and 1923 to 1931 when, increasingly ill and desperate for money, he lived in France and that turned up. The letters of Harris are more or less veiled requests to the rich and famous Shaw for help. The help came in the form of the letters back, in many cases cashed in by instant publication. Harris sent Shaw a copy of his two-volume *Oscar Wilde: His Life and Confessions* for comment; the long reply was incorporated into the book as an appendix. Similarly Shaw's response to Harris's sketch of him in *Contemporary Portraits* was included as "How Frank Ought to Have Done It". Shaw's letters on Jesus, war indemnities, A.E. (George Russell) appeared as a matter of course in the next issue of *Pearson's*. There were limits to what Shaw would do for Harris: he would not lend him money, he would not get the life of Wilde, nor to any of the other fantastic money-making schemes dreamed up by the unfortunate Harris in his last years. But his letters, and the time it took to write them, he gave freely and with full knowledge of their market value. He even authorized, though reluctantly, the use of the letters in the biography of him which was Harris's last attempt to retrieve his fortunes; and when Harris died before the book was out, leaving his widow very hard-up, Shaw saw it through the press himself and contributed an epilogue.

We cannot expect from all of this the intimate revelations of a private

friendship. Shaw knew that Harris would publish most of what he wrote, and in fact a majority of the letters in *The Playwright and the Pirate* did appear in print one way or another. Stanley Weintraub, however, has gone back to the original manuscripts where possible and has noted the changes made in the printed texts. With his introduction and the informative headnotes supplied to each letter, it is possible to follow through the whole sequence of the bizarre relationship. It makes for very lively reading in which not all the good lines are Shaw's. Harris was capable of a hard-hitting metaphor – "it is the gloss of hypocrisy I dislike as I dislike the coagulated grease of bad cooking" – and could characterize his own style as a "journalist with unconscious irony" – "words like clothes must not be too close to facts or they become stiff and ungraceful". Harris's words were flowing enough to involve him in innumerable libel suits. Professor Weintraub sums up the relationship as "less than a friendship but more than a correspondence" and one of the effects of reading the correspondence is to make one speculate on the nature of the bond between the two. There can be no questioning the loyalty of Shaw to the impossible Harris who "quarrelled with everybody but Shakespeare", but one may wonder what lay behind it. It seems unlikely that Shaw owed Harris anything for his employment on the *Saturday Review*; he was not one for the sentimentalities of Auld Lang Syne. There was some genuine admiration and affection in his feeling for Harris with all his "ruffianism". This is suggested as much in his hilarious send-up of the Harris style – "How I Discovered Frank Harris" – as in the formal tribute after his death:

He really had not one career but two, simultaneous but on different planes. On the imaginative plane he was the most generous of his transports of indignation, scorn, pity, civility, and defiance of snobberies, powers, and principalities enabled him to retain

the regard of those who had the same sympathies. But on the prosaic plane of everyday life he got into difficulties and incurred mal-edications from which it was not always possible to defend him.

However, Weintraub suggests that in Shaw's support for his less successful former colleague there may have been an "unconscious desire . . . for basking in his hard won self-esteem", even "an element of unrecognized cruelty in the underestimation of his generosity". It is hard to conceive of any generosity wholly unstained with egotism. But what commands respect in Shaw's attitude to Harris is his consistent refusal merely to be kind to him. His frequent merciless blasts in the letters of treating him as an equal, demanding from his literary work the exacting standards he demanded of himself.

The collection is interesting finally for what it reveals about what Shaw felt could be revealed about a writer. For all the supposed intimacies of *My Life and Loves*, Shaw wrote to Harris, "you don't really give yourself away as Rousseau did". For Shaw autobiography was the art of giving oneself away, an art in which he claimed some skill. Certainly the letter expressing what Harris in his biography insisted on calling Shaw's "sex credo" is remarkably candid for one so normally reticent on sexual matters, though still not frank enough for Frank. But Shaw was also well aware that the capacity for public self-exposure was a dramatist's gift of illusion. "The inner life has no place in individual portraits because it is not an individual thing; it drives me as it drives everyone else. The portrait must give the accidents of the surface, the idiosyncrasies of the vehicle: that is why I am able to give them away with so much detachment. This is why Shaw, egotistical and opinionated as he always appeared, yet seemed for himself a Keatsian negative capability. 'I am of the true Shakespearean type: I understand everybody and everything and am nobody and nothing.'

Anyone trying to define that "nobody and nothing" is bound to face formidable competition. "Everything about me that is of the smallest public interest," declared Shaw, "has been told, and very well told by myself." Certainly he half-got-wrote Harris's life of him, and supplied the bulk of the information for Archibald Henderson's three indigestible volumes, for the very readable popular biography by Hesketh Pearson, and for the violently dogmatic life by St. John Ervine. It remains to be seen what Michael Holroyd, Shaw's current biographer, who has the full benefit of all the papers, will do towards getting past the Shawian persona. In Weintraub's collection of articles, essays and introductions (including the introduction to *The Playwright and the Pirate*) published over the last twenty-five years, he tries to come at The

Elsewhere, however, the thorough investigation of sources does provide an illuminating context for the plays. It is interesting to learn that characters who seem so entirely creatures of the Shawian imagination – the Caesar of *Caesar and Cleopatra*, Lady Cecily Wyndcliffe, Andrew Undershaft – had other origins. And yet so often with the study of sources, the final effect is to reinforce the sense of the dramatist's creativity. Shaw may have been influenced by Mommensen in his creation of Caesar, but he remains unmistakably Shaw's Caesar. Undershaft may have had aspects of Nobel or Krupp but in the last analysis he is pure Shaw. The overall effect of *The Unexpected Shaw* is inevitably somewhat miscellaneous; although the individual essays were revised and expanded for the collection it was clearly impossible to give them the coherence of a unified theme or direction. On the unexpected Shaw, as one might expect, it is Shaw who has the last word: "All that can be predicted of him is unexpectedness."

The seen and the thought

Julie Hankey

STANLEY WELLS (Editor)

Shakespeare Survey: An Annual Survey of Shakespearean Study and Production

199pp. Cambridge University Press. £19.50.

0 521 24752 7

Hankey says somewhere that "we do not like to see our author's plays acted" and declared that going to the theatre was no substitute for reading the plays. Nevertheless he did go constantly and some of his best writing on the plays seems to have been conceived in reaction to or sympathy with what he had seen actors doing. Stanley Wells, in this volume of *Shakespeare Survey*, describes this aspect of Hazlitt's Shakespearean criticism, and traces substantial pieces of his literary output to their original place in his theatrical reviews.

Much Shakespearean criticism has since lost that cross-fertilizing link with the theatre, and much has been the reaction recently that, as Hazlitt points out, "the more we read of Shakespeare, the more we are disappointed in his plays." But even the more mainstream essays such as Elizabeth M. Yearling's "Language, theme, and character in *Twelfth Night*", or Joan Sellen's "Characterization of the four young lovers in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*", stand a little to one side of the characters as seen in performance. Shakespeare's syntax, vocabulary and images (all of course indispensable to themselves) are somehow treated as self-sufficient stand-ins for them. Joan Sellen's article, for example, on Shakespeare's syntax, vocabulary and images (all of course indispensable to themselves) are somehow treated as self-sufficient stand-ins for them.

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There are critical approaches represented in this volume which, almost by definition, have little to do with "seeing" the play at all – for example, Bruce Erlich's essay on "mediation" in two of the comedies, which sets up for *The Merchant of Venice* a Levi-Straussian "matrix" in order to solve out (if a matrix can solve) certain Nature/Culture oppositions corresponding (so he believes) to a confusion/harmony contradiction in Elizabethan society. This compressed summary does not do justice to his complicated and ingenious technique but it is clear that his approach seeks to reflect after the event, and not as a spectator. The same goes for Bryan Loughry and Neil Taylor in an article about the chess game in *The Tempest*, though they arrive at their conclusions more lucidly. If you say "the chess scene . . . presents in miniature the pattern of the entire play" you're not thinking so much of how the play comes over in performance (unless parodying them – we are to imagine a director setting the whole thing on a chess-board), but rather of the play as an artefact or a structure.

Two of the worries expressed by Harriet Hawkins are that much Shakespeare criticism is tendentious and reductive, and that no one reads it except other professional critics. As it happens, there are a few essays in this volume which might remedy this. These are theatre-historical pieces with no ambitions to explain what the plays "mean" but only to give an account of stage interpretations, with the result that they do not ignore their dramatic life. Studying the differences among actors also throws the plays open critically. Thus Simon Williams in his article on "Shakespearean production" at the Burgtheater in Vienna gives a revealing account of a nineteenth-century Antony in *Julius Caesar*. Apparently Antony had always been seen as "a genial popular leader, who suddenly finds himself, half against his will, a key figure in the power struggle of Roman politics". The actor Kaim presented him instead as "a cynical and ruthless manipulator, a malign figure . . . bent on using the unstable political situation to satisfy his own ambitions". In the forum scene, instead of delivering the speech in the usual way, contemporary, he made it clear that he had in mind the speech of the first Caesar, prepared carefully building up the analogy between actor and demagogue. At last, when he had the mob in his hand, he made a clinching gesture, flinging his toga over his shoulder; and "the colour of the toga was royal purple". The literary criticism which Harriet Hawkins most admires (in my opinion, rightly) is that which does not necessarily answer questions, but which poses them "correctly". The possibilities that 400 years of Shakespearean production have thrown up could help to shape and flesh out these questions – and without, in the process, bypassing the non-professional critic.

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Real republicanism

Norman Hampson

CLAUDE NICOLET

L'idée républicaine en France: Essai d'histoire critique

512pp. Paris: Gallimard. 138fr. 2 07 023096 1

They may not order this thing better in France, but they certainly order it differently. It is impossible to imagine any Englishman writing a philosophical study of this length and nature, about the evolution of Liberalism as it existed at the turn of the century. *C'est magnifique* - it certainly makes the shallowness of political debate in this country look very shabby - but one cannot help wondering whether or not *c'est la guerre*. In the first place, the contrast between the elevation of Claude Nicolet's political theory and the actual conduct of the governments of the Third Republic makes one a little sceptical about the whole exercise. In the second place, despite all his erudition and ingenuity, his argument contains no surprises and what emerges from the old hat is a very familiar rabbit.

It all started with the Revolution, a

historical event that transcended history, nothing less, in fact, than an incarnation, when the Word was made Flesh. This could only have happened in France, and although its universality is an essential part of its message, the republican ideal that forms the subject of the book is a very French affair. Nicolet quotes with obvious approval Gambetta's claim that there is "quelque chose d'essentiellement propre à notre nation, qui aurait la grâce et comme la fleur de la civilisation et du goût, qui serait, - ce qu'on n'a jamais pu nous enlever, - la véritable initiative du genre humain", etc. etc. If the ranks of Tuscany can scare forbear to cheer, they are neither expected nor entitled to join in.

Nicolet begins by trying to trace the evolution of this republican ideal, which he believes to have been incarnated in the radical and radical-socialist parties by the end of the nineteenth century. Originating in the Enlightenment, it entered French history with the revolution, only to disappear with Bonaparte's coup d'état of 1799. The debate continued throughout the nineteenth century until its goal was gradually achieved under the Third Republic. What was involved was nothing less than basing an entire society on principles that were both scientifically demonstrable

and morally normative. Only with the advent of Positivism was it possible to square, that particular circle and Nicolet investigates in some detail how this was done. What has happened since is left rather vague. Although theoretically capable of encompassing all Frenchmen, Nicolet is most insistent that his republican ideal was the peculiar property of the radicals. He excludes from the fold all those who acknowledged any allegiance to sources of obligation outside the nation state. That disposes of "ultramontane" Catholicism or socialism. He also rejects the line of argument of Montesquieu, Constant and Tocqueville, that based the freedom of the individual on a contrived balance of political power. This is written off as either monarchist or "Anglo-Saxon". In the second part of the book he tries to work out a defence of this position.

His own liberal credentials are impeccable: he is wholly dedicated to government by consent and hostile to all forms of authoritarianism, especially to the imposition of any kind of intellectual orthodoxy. This creates quite a few difficulties for him, since his political theory rests on Rousseau and on the "classical" definition of freedom as self-absorption in a *polis* of which

one is an active member. Rousseau is made to say that the general will is just (which presumably implies its accountability to standards external to a particular society) as well as general. As Saint-Just objected in 1791, this was exactly what Rousseau did not say. Whatever he may have intended, his actual definition implied that the general will was concerned only with the interest of the society in which it originated. The whole concept, moreover, unless it is reduced to the vaguest form of pious moralizing, implies that those who challenge the authority of the republic are acting illegitimately and must be "forced to be free". During the French Revolution, republican policies were, in fact, enforced in the name of the general will, irrespective of any evidence that they enjoyed popular support. Nicolet is rather coy about the Terror. Repugnant though it must be to him, it has to be accepted as an integral part of a revolution that he insists is a "bloc". At one point he tries to explain away that he admits were oppressive actions, by saying that "il s'agissait d'actions révolutionnaires, en dehors du pacte constitutionnel." This would not have satisfied Rousseau any more than it would have consoled the victims.

Time and again, the totalitarian implications of "classical" democracy conflict with Nicolet's liberal inclinations. It is all very well to argue that one can elaborate a scientific morality that can be enforced as educational orthodoxy with no more intolerance than suppressing the teaching of the idea that two plus two make five. Religious wars have been fought for less than that. The underlying philosophy justifies and indeed imposes the suppression of dissent when persuasion proves

inadequate. There is no room, as we have seen, for those who divide the allegiance between national and international foci. Nicolet does not seem much concerned about the fact that the general will, as his radical business. He could, of course, have admitted women as citizens - but sexual ones, who would not be allowed to set up femininity as any kind of principle of separate allegiance. He is rather evasive about the rights of any sector of the *république une et indivisible*, such as Algerian Moslems, to withdraw from a secular community of which they could never become an integral part. There were plenty of French republicans who supported the Algerian war as a necessary consequence of France's *mission civilisatrice* or regarded it as *la Vendée*.

This brings us back to the question relating Nicolet's *idée* to the French political life under the Third Republic. He could legitimately have said that he is dealing with principles rather than with policies, but an essential part of his argument is the rejection of "metaphysics" and the insistence that his principles are scientifically based on history itself and designed to improve the lives of real men in a real society. If the politicians who claim to be animated by these principles, when they controlled the government of their country, were as conspicuously more enlightened as successful than men of other persuasions - no one is pretending they were any worse - this would suggest that they had not found the magic key. To hint at anything of the kind is not merely to expose the error of one's Anglo-Saxon pragmatism, it was, after all, Montesquieu who thought that "la vertu même a besoin de limites".

Awfully arrayed

Antony Brett-James

GUNTHER E. ROTHENBERG

Napoleon's Great Adversaries: The Archduke Charles and the Austrian Army, 1792-1814

219pp. Batsford. £9.95. 0 7134 3758 8

Of books about the Napoleonic Wars there is no end. Many cover well-trodden ground, but very little has been written in English about the nature and achievements of the Austrian army in the long struggle. So Gunther E. Rothenberg's study fills a definite gap. The title is somewhat misleading, but is explained by the fact that Habsburg Austria, despite repeated defeats, despite the occupation of its capital, Vienna, on two occasions, and despite the loss of large areas of territory, remained the most determined and implacable of Napoleon's continental opponents, campaigning against his armies for over thirty years.

Professor Rothenberg shows how, time and again, the junior officers and other ranks fought with courage, fortitude and professionalism, whereas the high command and senior officers were cautious rather than enterprising, unduly concerned with preserving the army, and hoping to avoid defeat instead of seeking to achieve a decisive victory. Too often the Emperor and his ministers plunged into war before the army was ready to take the field. Communications were poor. An overall plan of operations was frequently lacking. Above all, the army was beset by a bitterly factionalized high command, whose conduct of war can charitably be described as erratic.

After each disastrous campaign strenuous efforts were made to reform the military establishment. Prominent as a reformer was the Archduke Charles, a slight figure barely five feet tall, who was plagued by mild epileptic fits, yet had the ability to inspire his troops. Despite his immense prestige and popularity he became the target for venomous intrigues - even the Emperor had him spied on - and

during the period of reforms in 1809 efforts to undermine Charles's position seriously hampered any coherent programme to rebuild the army. Notwithstanding some improvements in the administration, the training and the fighting elements, the army remained slow-moving and could never match the French in rapid marches and in foraging. In any case, it was impossible to reform Austria's society and state, and of course the Habsburg army reflected the society's servile.

Even in 1809 the army was not well prepared for war. Despite this, Charles inflicted at Aspern-Essling a major reverse on Napoleon, though, refusing to take risks he failed to exploit his success. At Wagram, though defeated, he made the French pay a heavy price in casualties. He denied to Napoleon the complete victory he needed. Rothenberg indicates clearly that Charles, although at his peak as a field commander in 1809, was at his worst as a general being, because he blamed his subordinates and even his gallant troops for letting him down at Wagram. Napoleon thought the Austrian soldiers deserved praise. Certainly Charles had failed to train his general staff to handle independent command, but he made their life still more difficult by his secretiveness, the ambiguity of his orders and the lack of discretion he allowed them. After 1809, the Archduke was never allowed to resume his military career, and he remained in retirement until his death in 1847.

Although there are surprising gaps in Austrian personal memoirs of the wars, Professor Rothenberg has researched widely in the effect, particularly in the *Kriegsarchiv* in Vienna. He brings to the fore a sound balance, between military and organizational details and important accounts of Aspern and Wagram. More about the Archduke's relations with contemporary events would have been of interest. He is, however, enigmatically elusive in some of the chapters.

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Volume 1: Papers of British Cabinet Ministers 1782-1900

75pp.
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Volume 2: The Manuscript Papers of British Scientists 1600-1940

109pp.
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Volume 3: Guide to the Location of Collections Described in the Reports and Calendars Series 1870-1980

59pp.
0 11 440144 6

£3.95 each. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, for the Royal Commission of Historical Manuscripts.

JANEY FOSTER and JULIA SHEPPARD

British Archives: A Guide to Archive Resources in the United Kingdom
533pp. Macmillan. £25.
0 333 32999 6

In 1869 Queen Victoria appointed the first Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts after representations that, to quote the Warrant,

there were belonging to many institutions and private families various collections of manuscripts and papers of great public interest . . . and that there would be considerable public advantage in it being generally known where such manuscripts and papers were deposited, and that the contents of those which tended to the elucidation of history, and the illustration of constitutional law, science and literature, should be published.

For ninety years the staff of the Commission strove to bring the promised advantages to the public from rooms in the Public Record Office, and then in 1959 its headquarters moved up Chancery Lane to its present location in Quality Court. In that year a new Warrant considerably enlarged the Commission's terms of reference and recognized the existence, under its wing, of the National Register of Archives which had been opened in 1945 and which is now an indispensable starting-point for almost all historical research. Roger Ellis, the Commission's Secretary from 1956 until 1972, has told the story of its first hundred years in his scholarly and witty introduction to the catalogue of its centenary exhibition, entitled *Manuscripts and Men*.

The Commission has by 1983 published 236 volumes of *Reports and Calendars*, covering some 624 privately owned collections of historical papers, the National Register of Archives houses, and to some extent indexes, over 25,000 lists and material of historical written material to be found in an ever-growing number of libraries, archives and private establishments all over the country. The Commission has tried many different methods of making this great store of information available to those unable themselves to visit Quality Court. At one end of the scale is the complete transcript of the original documents envisaged in the 1869 Warrant and adopted in many of the published *Calendars*, and the series of joint publications with local record societies begun in 1958 and now numbered 42; at the other, summary lists of catalogues available at the National Register published yearly as an annex to the Commission's annual list of selected *Accessions to Repositories*. A new approach is now heralded with the appearance of the first three volumes of the *Guides to Sources for British History*, and it is an approach which, in the future, may be applied to the nation's army of mobile historians. These are handy volumes which show, more or less at a glance, the location, rather than the detailed contents, of surviving groups of papers. The volumes are provided by three series: they are informative, well-indexed, clearly set out and (which is not always the case with books

emanating from HMSO) remarkably cheap.

Volume 1 of the series, *Papers of British Cabinet Ministers 1782-1900*, records in a summary form the present whereabouts of the papers, political or otherwise, that, at the time of their deaths, remained in the possession of the 229 men who sat in the British Cabinet at any time between the formation of Rockingham's second administration and the Cabinet reshuffle of October 1900. It thus dovetails neatly with Hazlehurst and Woodland's *Guide to the Papers of British Cabinet Ministers 1900-1951*, published by the Royal Historical Society in 1974. 474 separate groups of papers are identified, and it is interesting to note that of those only seventy-five still remain in private hands. However, the point is made that, despite the cries of the alarmists, only twenty-seven major collections have been posthumously sold and very few of these have been exported.

Volume 2, *The Manuscript Papers of British Scientists 1600-1940*, has been in gestation since at least 1966 and publishes the results of an enquiry into the present whereabouts of the papers of 634 British men of science (and one woman, Mary Somerville) - mathematicians, astronomers, physicists, chemists, geologists, botanists, medical men and engineers. Why 635 only? Because this was the number of those who were judged by the members of a joint committee of the Commission and the Royal Society to have fulfilled the criteria necessary to render a person fit for inclusion: that

the individuals concerned should all be recognised to have advanced significantly the state of knowledge in their respective fields through their scientific discoveries and inventions. In the case of engineers and technologists their innovations should have involved the application of entirely new principles.

It is obviously less easy to judge whether a man of science fits these criteria than it is to judge whether or not he was a cabinet minister, and there will be those who will quarrel about some of those omitted. Few, however, will quarrel over the usefulness of either of these guides, especially when one's interest happens to be in a figure whose papers now lie scattered like those, for instance, of Sir John F. W. Herschel, the astronomer, whose papers are now to be found in Austin (Texas), Harvard, Oxford, Greenwich, Cape Town, Hermonston, Dublin, St Andrews, Philadelphia, Edinburgh, Kew, three repositories at Cambridge and six in London, as well as in private hands.

Volume 3 of the series takes the 624 collections covered by the Commission's *Reports and Calendars* and provides a guide to their present whereabouts. It gives, in addition, information stored at the National Register on related or connected papers which were not originally covered in the published *Report or Calendar*. It thus replaces and greatly amplifies the only guide at present available, that forming part of the twenty-fifth *Report* of the Commissioners. It is an extremely useful publication, and one which, within its dry entries traces a complicated story of the migration of papers and manuscripts over the last 144 years out of private museums, rooms and into predominantly publicly-financed archive repositories. Chasing these collections was evidently a voyage of discovery for the Commission's staff and Godfrey Davis, its recently retired Secretary, notes in his preface that

It has been encouraging to discover that far less has gone abroad than was previously supposed and that far more has merely moved unmarked into libraries and record offices throughout the country where it has assumed a fresh and perhaps less familiar identity.

It is, of course, during the lifetime of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts that the whole record of St. Wietzold, John White and Hugo Buchthal can all be wrong in their

Route-maps for researchers

D. G. Vaisey

There are now many hundreds of archive repositories and the Commission in the early 1960s began publishing its list of *Record Repositories in Great Britain* - a slim volume now in its seventh edition. The latest editions of this directory have, however, declined in usefulness, following a decision to exclude from it all those record offices which care solely for the archives of their own parent organizations. This decision not only represented a disservice to those engaged in research but it also nettled, and indeed angered, some archivists.

In these circumstances the news that two archivists, Janet Foster and Julia Sheppard, were compiling a new directory of British archive repositories, and that this directory was to include not only addresses, hours of opening, etc., but also notes on each repository's historical background, major holdings, finding aids, facilities for readers, conditions of access, acquisitions policy and publications, was greeted with delight. The result was eagerly awaited. Now that it has appeared it is a very great disappointment. The opportunity to provide a comprehensive and accurate directory to what seems to many young researchers an impenetrable jungle has been wasted. It is true that there is much information in this book but its compilation appears to have bordered almost on the haphazard. On the face of it the directory covers 708 repositories, but on examination many of the institutions turn out not to be archive repositories at all, while many active and acquisitive offices or libraries which should be included are just not there. At least the Commission excluded repositories from its list according to some principle (however misguided); in this directory repositories are left out either because they failed to respond to a questionnaire or answer the telephone or, it seems, by chance. In Oxford, for instance, an area which must possess more archive repositories per square metre than almost anywhere else in the British Isles, one of the three largest - that in the Reference Library in the Westgate where the city's archives are housed, is not in; Magdalen, Nuffield and St Antony's are the only colleges included, though a glance at Paul Morgan's *Oxford Libraries outside the Bodleian*, or the index of locations at the end of *The Manuscript Papers of British Scientists 1600-1940* (both of which are included in the volume's bibliography) would quickly show how many others should be there. In the region around Oxford it is just as odd: Abingdon's archives are in Woodstock's are not. Elsewhere, for the compilers to omit such establishments as Trinity College, Cambridge, or St Bride's Printing Library on the grounds that "we were unable to obtain a reply" reflects no credit on themselves and does a positive disservice to those whom the book is intended to help. The coverage of the archives of noble households is equally peculiar: the compilers state in their introduction that "privately held collections of estate and family records have not been extensively covered, since many of these collections have been listed by the Historical Manuscripts Commission" (an odd enough reason), yet the archives of the Duke of Norfolk at Arundel and those of the Marquess of Salisbury at Hatfield House are included while those of, for instance, the Earl of Harrowby at Sandon are not.

Inconsistency of coverage is not the volume's only drawback. Some entries are positively misleading: that for the Norfolk Record Office, for example, says that it acts as the Diocesan Record Office for two deaneries in Ely Diocese while omitting to mention that it is the

Diocesan Record Office for the Norfolk Diocese. The first entry I looked up in the index (Alma Tadema) did not work. Spelling mistakes are legion (what is the "upping room" which is available at the Bodleian Library?), and the standard of bibliographical references is dreadful. The late Neil Ker's name is spelt wrongly again and again (though not consistently so) and his monumental *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* appears in the entry for Glasgow University Library as *Medical Manuscripts in British Libraries* minus its volume number. Some entries are apparently holds "insubstantial archives", while the facilities afforded by Carlisle Cathedral Library amount to "Table. Chairs".

The repositories which are covered are arranged alphabetically by place-name: in one supplementary list and also alphabetically by county. The collections mentioned are also covered by two indexes: a general alphabetical one and a "Key Subject Word List" designed to provide "a general guide to repositories with holdings of relevance in specific subject areas", but of questionable value.

It would be churlish to deny that *British Archives* contains more information than has any previous directory; yet it is a sad production which with a little more time and a good deal more care and persistence on the part of the compilers, together with a rigorous insistence on accuracy and higher standards by the publishers, could really have worked. As it is, we still need a directory to which we can turn with confidence as a reliable companion round the repositories into which have migrated so many of the papers covered by the Royal Commission's admirable new series of *Guides*.

Appearances of the apostle

C. R. Dodwell

LUBA ELEAN

The Illustration of the Pauline Epistles in French and English Bibles of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries

180pp, with 331 black-and-white illustrations. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £40.
0 19 817344 X

St Paul is one of the few figures that are immediately recognized in medieval art. Though he was later to acquire his sword, he needed no symbol of identity like the key of St Peter. We know him at once by a particular receding hairline and pointed beard. This conception of his appearance did not derive from the Scriptures, which simply remark that his letters were strong but his body weak. It comes from an apocryphal writing of the second century which formulated the "portrait type" by which he was represented in medieval art.

Not the least pleasing aspect of this book by Luba Elean is its feeling for history, roots and its willingness to begin at the beginning with explanations such as these. It also shows a readiness to face up to controversial problems in a sane and objective way. Foremost among these is certainly that posed by the frescos in the basilica of San Paolo fuori le mura in Rome, which are only known to us today from the Barberini drawings of 1634, since the originals were destroyed by fire in 1823. The question is how far these originals were themselves original. An ambiguous reference in the *Liber Pontificalis* may indicate that their origins go back to the mid-fifth century, but they are certainly known to have been "restored" or reworked during the Middle Ages, particularly in the thirteenth century by Cavallini, and this has become a celebrated area of debate. It is not likely that Professor Davis, Wietzold, John White and Hugo Buchthal can all be wrong in their

belief that a fifth-century iconography shines through the work of Cavallini, itself seen through seventeenth-century eyes, but the question of the balance between the early Christian and medieval elements remains.

Dr Elean's approach to this problem is a properly cautious one which recognizes all the difficulties. She has something positive to offer and, on the reasonable assumption that many of the scenes relating to St Paul were so worn after eight hundred years that a restorer there would have difficulty in deciphering them, she argues that Cavallini's analogies that Cavallini had probably kept to the ancient originals as far as he could but, for obvious reasons, departed from them when they were actually indecipherable.

As in so many areas of culture, the link between the early Christian and the medieval iconography of St Paul was the Carolingian period. This is represented in the damaged murals of San Benedetto, Males; and the far more splendid paintings of two "French" Bibles - the Vivian Bible and the Bible of San Paolo fuori le mura. The illustrations of these books seem to have made fairly free use of the sources available to them and, in so doing, provided the future with some choice of examples - as in the ability to portray Paul's conversion in terms that were either acquiescent or ecstatic. It is instructive to see that the artists of Western Christendom, in establishing a new independence for themselves, showed a more bloodthirsty interest in Paul's ultimate death than their opposite numbers in the Church of the East, though they were certainly later to be continuously receptive to Byzantine influences - most particularly in Italy. The Carolingian tradition was never wholly submerged, but Italian Romanesque painters, whether of a church like San Eusebio at Vercelli, or of manuscripts like two cited from Verona - must have had access to a Byzantine cycle of the Acts of the Apostles. Dr Elean analyses clearly and at length the complex impregnation of the two traditions.

No one who had looked at the numerous small pictures of the life of St Paul: in the initials of twelfth or thirteenth-century manuscripts would pretend that they are visually exciting but Dr Elean nevertheless shows that they have their own social interest - for example in the increasing desire to differentiate between the Jew and the Christian and to emphasize the opposition of the two faiths. Peter Brieger has shown us earlier that the hostility of the Church to heresies shaped some of the forms of Bible illustration of the twelfth century. Here we can see how, in this and the next century, the Crusades also had their influence. Wars often breed more intolerance away from the battle-lines than near them and, while some spirit of indulgence crept in between the Crusading knight and the Muslim, in Western Christendom itself the Crusades sharpened hostility to all enemies of Christianity and not least to the Jews. This is the period when St Paul acquires his sword, for this is the period of theological confrontation. It is a time when St Paul and his Epistles took on a significance which reached outside the field of manuscript illustration covered by this book, as we can see from a quotation from a German chronicler at Minden: "Moreover there was a great hanging in heaven which was imprinted with many apophthasms . . . and above all, it was interwoven with the narration of an epistle of Paul . . . and was fashioned for the adornment of the Minister and Choir in the year 1158 . . ."

This study of Pauline iconography does credit to all those concerned: to the author for an important work characterized by careful scholarship; to the Oxford University Press for publishing a book as specialized as this and for providing no less than 331 illustrations; and to Toronto for providing the primary tool for the research itself. I mean the Toronto Corpus of Bible Illustration, which is surely a monument to the initiative and foresight of the urbane scholars and former head of the History of Art Department there - Professor Peter Brieger.

Trying to compose

Richard Ollard

C. R. BOXER (Editor)

A Descriptive List of the State Papers Portugal, 1661-1780 in the Public Record Office, London: Volume 1, 1661-1723; Volume 2, 1724-1765. 465pp and 475pp. Lisbon: Academia das Ciências de Lisboa. £5 per volume, from the British Academy.

Calendars of State Papers are the soft drugs of historical research. Like booksellers' catalogues they keep yielding small, provocative items of information about subjects with which the reader is or once has been, tolerably familiar. One is lured into reading on. And Calendars often have what catalogues lack, the pull of the serial instalment. Some squabble breaks out; charges are brought; the gyves are slapped on the wrists of someone vehemently protesting his innocence; evidence is sought for in improbably distant places and, even more improbably, appears to be forthcoming. Unless interrupted or recalled by a sense of duty to what the reader can hardly resist finding out what happens in the end.

The present volumes are rich in such shapeliness, jerky, stories of piracy, bullion smuggling, desertion, embezzlement and simple clashes of

personality. Both Portugal and England - towards the end of the first volume one should clear one's throat and say Britain - were maritime, trading nations with important colonial empires. Both had a strong tradition of religious zealotry and intolerance on opposite sides of the Catholic/Protestant divide. It is not surprising that consuls and even ambassadors had to spend much of their time in trying to compose disputes arising from commercial competition that often led to violence, or from the conflict of churches that appeared to agree in nothing but militancy. "Trying to compose" is perhaps a euphemism. As C. R. Boxer points out in his brief but brilliant introduction, England was throughout the period by far the stronger power and did not hesitate to bully or overbear whether the case was one of high policy or private misdeed.

For England the period was also one of frequent, indeed latterly semi-permanent, war, first against the Dutch and then for the final hundred years, the French. At the opening of the period the Portuguese were fighting for their nationhood against the Spaniards who had already absorbed them once. But after that was of national independence, in what a considerable force of ex-Cromwellian soldiers played a valuable if quarrelsome part, Portugal's interest was to stay out of the European war in which her more bellicose ally was

MAURICE AYMARD (Editor)

Dutch Capitalism and World Capitalism/Capitalisme hollandais et Capitalisme mondial
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0 521 23812 9

In 1976, some thirty eminent French and Dutch historians met in Paris. This book reproduces the main papers which were given and the ensuing discussions, most of which centered on the Golden Age of the Netherlands, roughly 1580-1670. Many large countries during this period were temporarily weak, and the relative importance of the Netherlands was bound to rise. The miracle is that, in reached the heights it did. Fewer than two million people living on a small area of mud and sand, became the leading nation of the world in technology, trade, shipping, and finance.

Dutch agriculture threw off its feudal inefficiencies earlier than most, and it seems that much of the credit for this should go to the great families who were primarily great entrepreneurs.

They specialized in meat and in crops for industry like flax, hemp and dyes (cereals, which were less profitable, were imported). The entrepreneurs developed the economy in many other ways, too. Great peat resources provided industry with low-cost energy. Pumping water out of the land stimulated engineering skills and the building of windmills (which were used for industrial purposes like sawing timber as well as for grinding corn). Canals provided cheap and efficient inland transport. It is a pity that the book does not tell us more about these remarkable entrepreneurs.

Wages in Holland may have been higher than elsewhere, but productivity was higher still. Strikes, and opposition to labour-saving devices are not mentioned and were probably minimal. Labour-saving eventually created far more jobs than were lost initially. Industrial costs, especially in shipbuilding, were probably lower than anywhere, and orders for new ships poured in. The economy flourished despite world inflation, and the Netherlands attracted many foreign workers besides Jewish and Protestant refugees.

Alice Carter